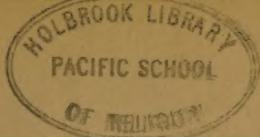


JANUARY 1957



# Christian News-Letter

NEGRO AND WHITE IN THE DEEP SOUTH

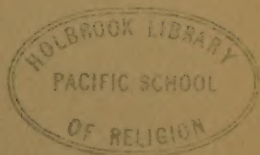
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EDITED BY JOHN LAWRENCE

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THE CHRISTIAN FRONTIER COUNCIL

## CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER

Editor: John Lawrence.

Assistant Editor: Mark Gibbs.

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# CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER

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## *From the Editor*

*(This issue of the C.N.-L. went to press before the resignation of Sir Anthony Eden.—J.W.L.)*

The Suez Group were right in thinking that the collapse of British power in the Near East would leave a vacuum that was mortally dangerous to Western civilisation. The stakes are indeed high. He who controls the Near East may well control the world for the next fifty years. If the oil of Arabia together with control of the Suez Canal were to fall into Communist hands, the world's precarious balance would be upset. A revolutionary power firmly established in Egypt and Arabia would be likely to prove an irresistible magnet to other Arab countries of North Africa. If North Africa becomes Communist it will hardly be possible to hold the present position in tropical Africa. And if that goes too, what can be held?

But the Suez Group were wrong in their estimation of our power to impose a settlement and they did not face the fact that their policy entailed as a corollary that we must be ruthless enough to maintain our position by force for as long as might be necessary. They grossly under-estimated the strength of Arab nationalism. It may be easy to scatter Arab armies but it is not easy for an occupying force to establish security in the Arab lands; French difficulties in North Africa are one indication of that.

If we and the French still had the position that we had seventy years ago and if we were prepared to impose our will with undeviating firmness we could have carried through a strong policy in the Near East and perhaps that would have been the least of many evils. But we ought to have known that we no longer had the material power to do this and, what is equally important, that British democracy will not settle down to a policy that is ruthless enough to suppress a movement like Arab Nationalism. We cannot do what the Kremlin is doing in Hungary or Hitler did in Poland. Thank God that we cannot. But let us recognise the limitations which this imposes on our policy.

It is no good crying over spilt milk. We must look to the future



now. And the future demands national unity. But unity is a moral thing; there can be no political unity without some degree of moral unity and the events of November have stirred the conscience of the nation as nothing has stirred us since the war. And the moral feelings are not all on one side.

Very serious charges have been made against the Government, but "collusion" is not the right word. The Government's denial that they instigated the Israeli attack on Egypt can be accepted without hesitation. "Connivance" is the word which best fits the story that is widely believed in responsible and well-informed circles here and abroad. The State Department have let it be known that according to their information, which comes from a "very authoritative" source, the French and British Governments knew that the Israeli Government proposed to attack Egypt, that they promised Israel diplomatic support in the U.N., though so far as I know the precise form of the support was not specified in advance; and that the British and French Governments made their own independent arrangements for simultaneous action against Egypt and then took elaborate precautions to prevent their partners in NATO and in the Commonwealth from discovering what was afoot.

These charges gained some support from statements made by the French Government. In this country the charges were repeatedly put to our own Government in one form or another and for long they were not denied. When *The Times* published a message from its Washington correspondent purporting to give the inner story that is believed by the State Department, the Foreign Office had "no comment" to make except to refer enquirers one day later to the Foreign Secretary's previous denial of the quite different charge that we had "instigated" the Israeli attack. It seems barely credible that a British Government should use such methods as are alleged, but I find that the story outlined above—or something very like it—is believed by people of undoubtable integrity, who have no motive for untruthfulness and are so well placed to know the truth that I can find no good reason to disbelieve them. On the other hand the Prime Minister has now assured us that he had "no foreknowledge" that Israel was going to attack Egypt. A good deal turns on the precise use of words. At what point does a "shrewd idea" that something is going to happen become "foreknowledge"? I have hitherto been a supporter of the present Government and I have no wish to be suspicious now, but I find myself left profoundly dissatisfied by the answers that have been given on behalf of the Government.

On any showing it seems that the Government did make some special arrangements to anticipate a contingency which they knew to be highly probable. But it should be emphasised that according to the available evidence only a very small group inside the Cabinet were privy to these arrangements, and that according to the same evidence, special precautions were taken to prevent most of the senior Civil Servants, who normally have access to secret documents, from discovering what was going on. And it may well be that some of the very few who knew what was intended advised against the proposed action.

I have no wish to encourage an access of righteous indignation in readers of the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER, but we are bound to form moral judgments on the facts available to us and it is therefore a Christian duty to press for disclosure of the full facts now that there can be no good reason for withholding them. Indeed I am appalled at the moral flabbiness of a good many highly placed people who could, one would suppose, discover more than they appear to have done.

For myself I do not consider that the Government's action in this matter has been either wise or good. But I have tried to understand the views of those who differ from me. The best argument for the Government that I have heard, runs something like this. Nasser is a Hitler in that he combines insatiable ambition and unscrupulous ability with great demagogic gifts. It is granted that Egypt is not Germany and the Arabs are not Germans, but the strategic position of the Arab lands is such that an unscrupulous man who got control of a united Arab world would be a danger too great to be tolerated. Moreover, Nasser's vanity is such that he thinks he can use the Russians for his own ends, whereas in fact the Russians are using him and intend to swallow the whole Middle East. This had to be prevented at all costs; and any methods were justifiable. There are times when it is right to put a blind eye to the telescope. In the early months of the Nazi regime, before the Reichswehr became powerful, it would have been right to encourage Pilsudski to intervene against Hitler, as he wanted to do. If Hitler had been nipped in the bud, millions of lives would have been saved. Such arguments deserve to be taken seriously, even by those who do not find them altogether convincing. But they are not precisely the arguments which the Government have used.

Even if all that is said against us is true, that does not absolve anyone else. Those who now read us lectures ought to consider their own contributions to the present disaster. Russia has done and is



doing her best to stir up trouble. The Americans prepared the ground for disaster by their irresponsible undermining of the British and French positions in the Middle East and North Africa. If they had planned to turn us out and take our place that would have been sharp practice, but it would have been sensible. To help in destroying the last relics of the Pax Britannica without putting anything effective in its place was criminal folly. And the Americans had their share in precipitating the immediate crisis by the tactless manner of their change of policy about the Assuan dam. Since then American diplomacy has been neither quite realistic nor quite honest. And India seems to apply differing moral standards to events in Egypt in Hungary and in Kashmir. Anglo-American friendship and Commonwealth unity must be renewed; but they cannot be fully restored until each country is prepared to admit its faults. It is for us to begin

All members of the United Nations must take some share of the collective blame for the way in which the U.N. let things go from bad to worse without seeming to realise the consequences of their inaction. But it is easy to see why the members of the U.N. shrink from taking responsibility. The problem is both intractable and explosive. The Arabs make no secret of their intention to wipe Israel off the map when they can and in the meantime they have made some murderous raids on Israeli settlements. The Arabs reply that the Israelis show every intention of enlarging their present boundaries by force and that they too have carried out barbarous raids on Arab villages. The basis of the Arab case is that the state of Israel was established through the displacement of a large Arab population, who have nowhere to go. Arab politicians may not be above exploiting the misery of the refugees. But it is no answer to an injustice to say that it suits some politicians. Many Jews and Arabs would agree on this, if on nothing else, that Israel cannot survive for ever within her present haphazard boundaries. Either she must expand or she will go under. So each side was determined to anticipate an attack by the other. And each is convinced that other rounds are to come.

At present the Jews with their courage, discipline and technical skill have the advantage. The Arab states, divided, corrupt and inefficient cannot yet stand up to the Jewish army but a united Arabi with a reformed Government would have overwhelming advantage. The problem is to prevent the Jews driving the Arabs into the desert now and to prevent the Arabs driving the Jews into the sea later on.

In a remarkable letter published in *The Times* for 21st December Mr. Walid el Khalidi points out that the state of Israel is not merely

geographical fact but a "concept" with a dynamic mystique which tends to break geographical bounds and to become uncontainable. It is the fact of this mystique as much as anything else which prevents the Arabs from becoming reconciled to the permanent existence of the state of Israel. Gentile sympathisers with Zionism should realise that, by putting the support of so many Western Christians behind an insufficiently defined Jewish aspiration, they have helped to make it difficult for Israel's neighbours to accept her into the family of Middle Eastern states. Among other pertinent questions Mr. el Khalidi asks:

"Is the growth of a militant Near East Zionism with its own logic and momentum compatible with the long-term interests of the majority of world Jewry, the Arab inhabitants of the Near East, or world peace?"

"Is the preponderant western help to Israel reconcilable with the establishment of organic links between Israel and her Asian and African neighbours?"

and he asks for "a serious analytical reappraisal of the concept of Israel, not only by Jews (Israelis, Zionists and others) but also by Israel's well wishers in the west". Such a reappraisal is one of the conditions of peace.

While British forces were still in Suez it was just possible to prevent Jews and Arabs from rushing at each other's throats and it was not immediately apparent how great a gap our withdrawal had left. The United States alone had the strength to take our place. A firm American policy might have kept the peace but America was not firm. It was very true that a spark might kindle a forest fire. Some one had to put the spark out and the British and French Governments were right to think that they had to take drastic action. But they acted in the wrong way and at the wrong place. Our ultimatum should have been addressed at least as much to the U.N. as to Israel and Egypt. We could have said to the U.N. "we are acting because you have failed to act in the past, but if you now take effective action to separate the combatants we shall withdraw. If you say that you have no forces of your own, here are our forces at your disposal for any reasonable purpose". If having said this, we had landed at Gaza, we should still have been in an irregular position legally but our moral position would have been hard to assail. But to issue an ultimatum that allowed Israel to advance a hundred miles into Egypt and forbade the Egyptians to resist beyond this point, and then to land at Port Said instead of Gaza gave the impression that we were more concerned to regain Suez and overthrow Nasser than to separate the Israeli and Egyptian armies.



An Arab might claim with reason that many of the troubles of the Near East are due to two things that have been done by Westerners. Such unity as Arabia had was broken deliberately by the British and French when the Ottoman Empire fell; the artificial succession states are not viable. And the State of Israel was established with Western support. Merely to raise the question of the future of Israel causes pain to all concerned but the facts have to be faced. The whole world is put in extreme peril by the instability of Israel's frontiers and the world may yet be forced to accept a more drastic solution than any that has so far been proposed. So it is well that we should begin now to reconsider the future of Israel, though it should be emphasised that in the present heat no proposals whatever stand a chance of being considered reasonably. Timing is important and the time for detailed proposals has not yet come.

### Is There A Solution?

How then can the Arabs be induced eventually to accept the existence of a Jewish State in Palestine? It is crying for the moon to suppose that they will ever willingly acquiesce in the existence of an armed Israel within its present boundaries. But if Israel were disarmed and protected by an international force, one could begin to talk. And if Israel gave up enough territory to allow a fairly large number of Arabs to return to their homes and paid compensation to enable the rest of the refugees to be settled, then one could begin to plan for the future.

It would not be fair, nor would it be possible to let the whole burden of these adjustments fall on the Jews and Arabs. One of the best ways for the rest of the world to help in such a settlement would be to establish an internationally financed Jordan Valley Authority. Plans for further use of the Jordan's water exist, but they depend on co-operation of Jews and Arabs and cannot be implemented in the present atmosphere of hatred. Yet if the tension could be reduced Jordan water would make it possible to resettle many Arab refugees and expand cultivation in Israel enough to absorb many if not all of the Jews displaced from any land returned to Arab control; if a reduced Israel was not able to hold all her present population it would be our plain duty to welcome Jewish immigration.

It is one of our worst failures of sympathetic imagination that we see the wrongs of the Arabs much less vividly than we see the wrongs of Jews. We conceal from ourselves the possibility that the wrongs inflicted on the Jews by Europeans may be made the excuse for other



wrongs which Jews and Europeans co-operate to inflict on Arabs. In spite of the great contribution which the Churches have made to the relief of the Arab refugees, Christian opinion as a whole still fails to take seriously the desperate need of nearly a million Arabs who have lost home and livelihood to Jewish settlers. Until this problem is settled justly there will be no forgiveness and no peace in the Middle East.

The first reaction to suggestions such as those made above will no doubt be an indignant rejection by all parties. All stand to make big sacrifices in such a solution. The Arabs would accept the permanent existence of a Jewish state in the heart of the Arab world. The Jews would have to give up hard won and much loved land and would have to trust others to defend them. The rest of us would have to pay most of the bill and find the troops to police the borders of Israel. But in the end all would gain in security far more than they would lose in other ways.

The present weak and divided Arab states would not find it easy to accept such a solution. But a united Arab state joining together Iraq, Syria and Jordan for a start would be big enough to stand against Israel. When more of the Arabs are united in one state we may find them less hysterical, which is one reason why we should wish to see them so united. Other reasons are given by Mr. T. M. Heron on another page.

Nasser's goal is Arab unity in the widest sense and most of us are in a mood to suppose that what Nasser wants must be bad. Nasser's picture of himself as Khalif of an empire extending from Morocco to Baghdad and from Aleppo to the southern Sudan is not attractive, but that should not blind us to the grave dangers and distresses that follow from Arab divisions. The instability of the Arab lands flows from frustration. The fearful and growing poverty of the peasants is thrown into relief by patches of fantastic wealth. It ought to be possible to use the money from oil to develop the whole area, but political divisions (sometimes imposed by the West) make this impossible. Iraq has made a good start at bringing her economy up to date, but no other Arab country has the advantages of Iraq. Egypt, for instance, has too large a population for her resources, but no oil. Kuwait has a great deal of oil and very little population. And so on.

During the war the Middle East Supply Centre established by the allies took a dynamic view of the area's economy as a whole and laid the foundations of a rational scheme of development. But this depended on the allied control of supplies to the Middle East, and the ruling cliques in the countries concerned were too short-sighted to continue

the scheme. However, it may be that the time is now ripe for an ambitious step forward. *The Observer* for 16th December published a "plan for the Middle East" which has the merit of considering the political, economic and social problems of the Middle East as a connected whole. This "plan" which is the work of an independent group was published simultaneously in fourteen different countries. It gives no more than the barest outline of a plan, but its approach is realistic and it will be worth elaboration. It makes a number of striking proposals, of which perhaps the most remarkable is the proposal for "the establishment of an International concern under the United Nations which would take over and operate all Middle East oil pipelines, and would charge not only the economic cost . . . but a fixed levy to be paid into the funds of a Middle East Development Agency to be set up under the Technical Assistance Board of the U.N.". Under this scheme the oil companies and oil consumers would have to pay a bit more for their oil, but they would be reasonably sure of getting it. Quite a small addition to the price of petrol would provide a sizeable sum of money for the development of the Middle East. If plans such as these are carried out boldly and skilfully the Middle East will be transformed in twenty years.

We cannot afford to fail in boldness and imagination. If we do nothing, all pipelines will be in constant danger and it is probable that all British oil concessions in the Middle East will be nationalised. That would do harm to the Middle East and it would do great harm to us, but this will not prevent it being done. It is a fact that nationalism will often cut off its nose to spite its face, and we ought no longer to be surprised when it happens. It is for the oil companies to act while there is yet time and to put their activities on a new basis as an international public utility. If they take the initiative now they stand a good chance of getting a scheme through on their own terms. If they wait, they will have to accept what others are willing to give. It would not be surprising if the oil companies were to put forward some bold and far-reaching scheme; there is more statesmanship in the upper ranks of industry than the general public realises.

### Britain's Part

After the events of November nothing will be the same. If we drift the world will become much worse. If we seize our opportunities it may become much better. Our situation is disconcerting but it is not desperate. We are no longer one of the great powers but we are the first of the middle powers, and on those occasions when we carry



the bulk of the Commonwealth with us we are something more than an ordinary middle power, though still not a great power in the sense that we can "go it alone". In the long run this gives us some special opportunities of leadership, for the proper articulation of the world's body politic needs a number of middle powers, who must play an active role. At present we suffer from the fact that there is no-one to stand between the great powers and small countries.

We should however realise that for the present we are discredited—whether rightly or wrongly makes no difference to the fact—and no proposal that we may make will have an easy passage. If we want a proposal to be accepted it may be advisable to wait for someone else to put it forward. It is useless to rely on our own strength; our only hope is in collective strength and in the growth of international order. If the law of the jungle is to prevail we shall go under and so will every small and middle power. So it is our supreme interest to uphold the collective judgments of the U.N. about who is the aggressor on any occasion even if the judgment sometimes seems very hard.

Our own way of life grew from a mediaeval respect for law and we often forget how hard mediaeval law could be, how unjust its administration sometimes was and how little say most of the population had even at the best moments in making the law. But even a law which valued the life of a deer more highly than the life of a man, was infinitely better than no law at all. And now a law that is only just beginning to be formed can only define aggression in a very rough and ready way. Indeed the "law" that lies at the base of the international system of order which is now emerging can only be called "law" by an extension of the word's meaning. But there is a great deal to say about that. The present crisis is forcing all of us to think more deeply about the meaning of "law" and of "order", which is not the same thing. The C.N.-L. must return to this theme.

If we can no longer rely primarily on our own strength we shall still need to maintain sufficient force to make an effective contribution to the general defence; but we shall no longer feel obliged to develop all the most expensive weapons ourselves. We might, for instance, find it prudent to give up the effort of making H-bombs and the most expensive guided missiles. Our main effort should, henceforth, go into trying to make existing international organisations work better. And I am not thinking only of U.N.O. It is equally important to rebuild and develop the Commonwealth and to put our whole weight behind many different manifestations of the movement for European unity; we cannot afford to do otherwise. We must face the fearful deficiencies of U.N.O. both

in constitution and in morale and we must take the lead in remedying both. If our more modest station in life now enables us to economise something on defence we can give more generously to international purposes. Here, surely, our first duty is to under-developed countries within the Commonwealth, but concurrently with this we should put our ablest public servants on to the task of strengthening U.N.O. and its agencies. It is not sufficiently realised how the U.N. have been handicapped by the reluctance of all countries to encourage their ablest citizens to work for U.N.O. If we set the lead by seconding some of our ablest civil servants to the U.N. others are likely to follow our example.

Nothing could do more to raise the prestige of U.N.O. and its agencies. It is unfortunately clear that they do in fact require more help than they are getting if they are to perform effectively the tasks which the world continues to lay on them, but the future role of U.N.O. and its agencies is another vast subject to which the C.N.-L. must return on another occasion. There are indications that some members of the Government are now convinced that we are in a new position in which U.N.O. and its agencies and the movement for European unity have a new importance for us. So, perhaps, we are at last getting beyond the point where some supporters of U.N.O. seem to think that it can act by magic without the member nations shouldering their responsibility, and where most of its opponents refuse to face the possibility that international agencies can sometimes be the means of rapid and effective action of a kind that individual great powers could not take.

If the collective power and influence of the U.N. is to be strengthened, we must start from the Middle East where the present crisis has its origin. The formation of an International Police Force to go to Egypt is an important step forward but it is not enough to secure peace. The next step should be to send a similar but larger force to Gaza. Sir Kenneth Grubb has suggested the establishment of "a neutral and international zone on the borders of Israel to include the Gaza strip and run right down to Akaba. It should be acquired by compulsory purchase from both Israel and Egypt and placed under the jurisdiction of the U.N. It might cost two to three hundred million pounds". Other similar proposals have been put forward in other quarters. They will arouse opposition but they deserve to be taken seriously. A strong U.N. force based on Gaza might hope to keep the peace on a troubled frontier. Moreover it would put the Gaza strip refugees under international protection and would provide employment for many of



them. And it would go a long way to provide Egypt with money to build her high dam. But the high dam will not be worth much unless there is a fair certainty that those states which are higher up the Nile will allow an adequate supply of water to reach Egypt. The Nile waters rise in Uganda, the Belgian Congo, Kenya, Tanganyika and Abyssinia before they flow through the Sudan and Egypt. An international Nile Valley Authority could secure Egypt from her nightmare that other countries will take the water on which her life depends and it could confer other striking benefits on the Sudan, Abyssinia and Uganda.

All these schemes and others of the same kind are fraught with every kind of difficulty but all the difficulties are of a kind which have been overcome before. I am old enough to have seen the dreams of small groups of determined young men become the facts of today. The Schumann Plan and Point IV aid seemed very distant prospects when I first heard them debated in 1939 and 1940. But the European common market for steel and coal is now an established fact and provides a model which seems to be capable of wider application. And it is now accepted policy in this country and, what is more important, in the United States, that the more highly developed countries should help those which are less fortunate without any immediate prospect of a commercial return. Creative ideas have a way of growing. There is more hope today for a new international order than there has ever been. We have come to the end of a road and we know that we must start afresh.

I have left to the last the implications of the current crisis for our domestic affairs. But it is clear that the whole precarious balance of our economy and of our system of welfare is threatened. Unemployment may be temporary but there will be some unemployment and no one knows how bad it will be or how long it will last. Can we still afford regular annual wage increases? And if not, shall we not have to impose restrictions on profits and/or expense accounts, so that justice may be seen to be done? But how can we do this without curbing initiative and taking the resilience out of our economy? Whatever Government is in power we are likely to see a return of restrictions and regulations for a time at least. How can this be reconciled with freedom? Someone will have to go short and we do not have the bond of war to make us all stand together. Social harmony will be strained to the limit at a time when we can least afford it. Here are subjects for Frontier thinking in the months and years that lie ahead.

J.W.L.

# Negro and White in the Deep South

THOMAS R. THRASHER

A French observer, in a book which gained wide circulation in the 1920's, had something like this to say: "The Negro problem in America is of a nature so profound and disturbing that no one in America dare to look into its depths". In the almost thirty years since then the problem has become more widely dispersed, but no less profound and no less disturbing, than it was then.

As a native of Mississippi, a priest of the Episcopal Church, a southerner, but not, I pray God, an uncritical follower of all that professes to be southern tradition or southern way of life, I have had a life-long concern for the Negro in his search for social justice, and for equality of opportunity. When I was six or seven years old a lynching took place in our town. I don't believe I was greatly aware of the Negro involved, but I did see what it did to the white community. The thin veneer of civilisation was for the moment wiped away, and we lapsed into a frightening and debasing savagery. To-day after forty years a remembrance of that day and those events fills me with shame, remorse, anxiety, dread, fear.

I cannot therefore make any pretence to objectivity. My reaction to the problem is deeply emotional, but I do not think it to be an emotion that defies analysis. Therefore it is my purpose in the pages which follow to analyse and define that emotion to the best of my ability and to express as best I may the direction in which a solution may be found. This is a personal witness and does not pretend to be a broad and sweeping prescription to set all men right.

It has been almost a hundred years since the defeat of the South in the American Civil War, the fall of Richmond and General Sherman's march to the sea, and yet, because I have heard old people describe them in terms of personal bitterness, they are more real to me than many experiences I myself have had. The injustice and the social chaos of reconstruction, the vengeful but abortive attempt to overturn our political institutions, the attempt to place government in the hands of irresponsible Negroes and carpet-baggers, all these are memories transmitted by word of mouth which have affected my way of thinking. The love of the land, the devotion to my own people, a sense of the gallantry with which our people defended their homes and institutions



from a hostile intruder, the legendary exploits of southern heroes have been bread and meat to us, and bone and flesh and sinew. We have not lived on hate, but our love for our country has been first a love for the South and only secondarily has it been a love for America. When Toscanini played "Dixie" in Atlanta he received an ovation such as he would have never had by playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" anywhere in the world. I am neither defending nor attacking his state of mind. I am simply stating a fact, a fact with which "outsiders" must come in contact. It is this state of mind rather than the theoretical principles of the Democratic party that has most to do with the persistence of the solid South.

### **The Negro in His Place**

Since the enunciation of the "Separate but equal" doctrine in the Supreme Court case of "Plessy versus Ferguson" in 1898, two separate civilisations have been gradually evolving in the south. Booker T. Washington, a leading Negro of the time, plainly adopted the principle here set forth, not perhaps as a statement of final truth, but as a means of survival. And the incomparable progress of the Negro under these conditions is a tribute to his wisdom and statesmanship. However, though it worked as a temporary expedient, it could not stand up as a permanent solution of the problem. The dominant group accepted the principle of "separate" in all good faith, but paid little more than lip service to "equal". It was a satisfaction to those who "liked the Negro in his place". But the talented Negro was less and less contented with that place. It led the white man to speak with respect of "the good nigger", and the Negro to speak of the same person with scorn, as an "Uncle Tom". Within its framework there were many instances of friendship, goodwill, mutual understanding, and real devotion, but it was a framework that doomed him to an inferior place in society. To this day in the deep south there are white men of goodwill who cannot use Mr. or Mrs. in addressing a Negro. They can call them "Reverend", they can call them "Doctor" if they have earned the degree, they can even call them "Professor", but "Mr." never in the world. It is not a matter with them of willingness or unwillingness, it is a matter of simple inability. Their lips simply will not frame the forbidden word. We have thus the unfortunate situation of being unable to speak to our peers across racial lines. So the southern white man who claims to understand the Negro may be quite sincere, and within the limitations of his experience may understand the Negro who works for him, or who borrows from him or who trades with

him. But he has rarely, if ever, conversed with his opposite number in the Negro community. This is the general situation. There are exceptions in inter-racial groups such as the Southern Regional Council and its affiliates, but even here the atmosphere is somewhat self-conscious and not conducive to the free and easy interchange of ideas that might promote understanding. Organisations are concerned with resolutions and programmes more than with conversation and I believe that in this area conversation would bear better fruit.

Within this framework there is a magnanimity, almost a grandioseness upon which the Negro in need can always depend, if he is tactful, polite, humorous, and adaptable to the pattern of behaviour that the white man deems characteristic of him. Many Negroes are casual in their sexual behaviour. Many Negroes are irresponsible in meeting financial obligations. One employee of mine years ago owed weekly instalments on purchases greatly in excess of his weekly income. I asked him how he managed and he replied, "they don't all catch me every week". Many Negroes drink and gamble and get involved in cutting scrapes, the favourite weapon being "switch-blade knives". These characteristics may be due to causes sociological rather than racial, but the typical white reaction is to say: "That's the way Negroes are". Because he feels this to be so, and because after all "Negroes are just like children", when a Negro "gets into trouble", he will do things to help him out that he would not think of doing for a white man in the same predicament. Since the lowest wages are paid to cooks and maids and yardmen, the lowest class Negroes are attracted into these jobs, therefore white people know personally only the low class Negro. It is all but inevitable, then, for us to generalise from our meagre experience, and to think of the race as a whole as being like those we have known.

The Southern white community then has found no fault with the *status quo*, and though there have been times when, disturbed by some statement by Walter White, or the N.A.A.C.P. (National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People), fears began to rise in their breasts, all they needed for reassurance was to talk it over with the cook, who always allayed such fears by saying that Negroes like segregation just as much as white people.

When the Supreme Court finally gave its long delayed decision declaring in effect that "separate is unequal", there was very little excitement in Montgomery. A new white school was opened adjacent to a Negro neighbourhood, and Negro children presented themselves for enrolment. Though they were denied admittance this caused little



excitement. The local paper printed front-page pictures of the children, and the white community allowed "how cute they looked in their starched white dresses". The Citizen's Council had a meeting to which they invited everybody who was "mad at the N.A.A.C.P.". But very few people showed up.

This was not to say that there was no concern, but such concern as there was, was a silent concern and anxiety as to how we could maintain our accustomed ways and still obey the law of the land. The Supreme Court itself had said "as soon as practicable", and this did not sound like general and immediate race mixing in the schools regardless of consequences. Are not these things decided largely on the school district in which a child lives? We have contended for years that in Northern schools Negroes present no problem because they are so few: would a sprinkling of Negroes in our white schools be any more of a problem? There seemed far less resistance to the idea for the graduate schools in our state universities, and with that as a first step the idea of integrated school systems might filter gradually to the lower levels.

### Boycott of the Buses

I do not believe it necessary to add anything to thousands of words already written concerning the circumstances which led to the boycott of the buses. But it has revealed surprising things to the white community, things which even yet many of them find it hard to believe. It came as a bitter shock to many that the majority of our local Negroes were discontented with our time-hallowed inter-racial customs. "We have always had such good race relations in Montgomery", they say. The Negroes are now telling us, "race relations have been good because of what we have been willing to put up with". Another shock was the intelligence and statesmanship with which the organisation was perfected. It is commonly believed by whites that any inter-racial "trouble" is always the work of "radicals" from outside, but the leadership here has been clergy of local churches, not Montgomery born, it is true, but Southern born. Many whites believe that these men were planted in Montgomery to foment discord, but evidence of the fact has yet to be discovered. It is commonly believed that the Negro is timid and that at the first sign of determined opposition he will retreat and his organisation will dissolve. But again over many long months the Negro in Montgomery has stood firm in his non-violent opposition to what he considers to be unjust to his race.

When a way of life which one has inherited, and which one has perhaps never questioned, is thus threatened at what appears to be its

very foundation, there is small wonder that panic and desperation seized upon him. The Citizen's Council movement seems to be an expression of that spirit. It is dedicated to racial purity, to maintenance of the integrity of the white race. Its general assumption is that any lowering of the traditional barriers of separation between the races will lead to what it calls "mongrelisation". It is unfortunate for the cause of racial emancipation that the word "integration" was used: though it applied to the schools, and in that connection is unambiguous, in the connections now used it has become, among vast numbers of white southerners, a synonym for "amalgamation". The literature produced by the group is designed to inflame racial prejudice and to fan the flames of racial hatred, and it does so by ringing the changes on the traditional question: "Do you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" So the endless argument goes on, the Negro insisting that what he wants is justice, fair-play, first-class citizenship, equality of opportunity, the white answering, "this isn't what he wants at all. He wants to marry your daughters". Communication does not exist because the Negro demand is countered by a refutation of a demand not made. If it were not so tragic one might laugh at the whole situation.

The Church has not always been aware that there is a Christian point of view in race relations. Even the missionary who often gave his life to take the Gospel clear across the world tended to be condescending in his attitude to the "natives" to whom he preached. Slavery was not seen as a violation of Christian principles for over 1800 years. The "white man's burden" was in all sincerity looked upon as his duty to lead the heathen out of darkness and into light, even when it was profitable for him to do so. The events of the twentieth century have made us realise for the first time in history that superficial dissimilarity is not necessarily a sign of superiority on the one hand and inferiority on the other, and that superiority of arms, organisation, and industrialisation does not confer on the superior the privilege of exploiting the inferior. We are beginning to see, taught by "subject peoples", that the implications of the parable of the Good Samaritan are not complimentary to the privileged, and that the last shall be first in a racial as well as a moral and religious sense. By reducing racism to an absurdity Hitler taught us to see the ridiculousness of our own pretensions, and by reducing the size of the world human ingenuity has made us recognise that among our neighbours we have got to learn to be neighbourly.

So the Church has discovered that One is our Father and all we are brethren, that there shall be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus. Her missionaries now go out

not to put trousers on the Patagonians, but to help the Patagonians to respect themselves and their culture, and to apply the Gospel of Christ to their peculiar needs. In a world where all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God, our categories of "superior and inferior" fade into insignificance. "We have the same starry heavens above us", as someone has said, "and the same dogs of passion at our heels, and therefore ought to love one another."

William Temple was fond of saying, "the proper attitude toward an occurrence is not to ask whether it is good or bad, but rather to seek how good may be won out of it". This statement is particularly applicable to our present situation in the south. The desegregation rider on a bill for Federal aid to education is a case in point. Desegregation in education gained a victory at the expense of education. What kind of victory is it to have the right to attend schools if the schools are not worth attending? In the present mood of Southern legislatures insistence on immediate desegregation might lead to the abolishing of our system of public education. It is every man's duty to hold to his ideals, but it is likewise his duty to come to terms with the reality with which he is confronted. I personally believe many of my Southern white contemporaries to be wrong in their determination to defy the Supreme Court. But wrong or right, that is the way they feel, and at the moment political power is in their hands. I am equally strongly convinced that immediate and total integration of schools would be a calamity for Negroes as well as Whites. Without apology I am a gradualist, a moderate, a believer in social change, but not in social catastrophe. I know of a conference on race relations that was held in Alabama to which no Negroes were invited. This is a sort of symbol of our problem.

The Christian doctrine of man is that he was made in the image of God, that by sin that image has been blurred, and that his redemption has come not by his own effort, but by the Son of God entering into his life, and dying in order that man might live. Any social organisation which perpetuates a sense of self-righteousness on the one hand, or which seeks to perpetuate a permanent sense of inferiority on the other is a sinful social organisation. But a sense of sin cannot be accepted by one group at the hand of another group whom they deem to be equally guilty. God, Himself, does not beat us over the head with our sin, but rather in the Cross enables us to see at once, the depth of our degradation, and the height of His love.



# New Life in the German Church

MARK GIBBS

*The German Evangelical Academies meet a need which is as great here as it is in Germany. Why have we allowed the Germans to outstrip us?—J.W.L.*

We are gradually increasing our knowledge of the *Evangelische Akademien*. Visitors to Germany speak of the impressive buildings at Arnoldshain, near Frankfurt, or Loccum, near Hanover; others have met Academy directors on the platforms of the Kirchentag, or have read copies of Academy magazines like *Die Mitarbeit* from Friedewald. And it is becoming clear that here is a major development in the Church of post-war Europe. Already there are some twenty new church colleges, all founded since 1945, a flood of literature, sizeable networks of local house groups, a Press Academy, a Directors' Association, and now a European association of similar colleges.\*

It is important first to get the name right. *Evangelische Akademie* cannot easily be translated: it does not mean "Evangelical Academies". They are not "evangelical" in our nineteenth-century tradition (though they certainly attempt to spread the Gospel). Since the Reformation *Evangelisch* has denoted the Protestant Churches of the different German states or provinces (now called *Länder*). In Germany, you are usually either *Evangelisch* or *Katolisch*. But "Protestant" is not quite right either, at least for anybody who forgets that in some sense the Church of England is *both* Catholic and Protestant, for the Academies often follow a tradition of liturgical worship which is distinctly not "Nonconformist". The word "Academy" presents difficulties, too. In Scotland it denotes a secondary grammar school, and in Britain generally it has a vaguely scholastic flavour, which is not always attractive. Dr. Eberhart Müller, who founded the first Academy in 1945 at Bad Boll, near Stuttgart, has said that the word was adopted in order to recall the frank, informal and ruthless discussions and arguments of the Greek academies, with people like Socrates asking awkward questions—and perhaps suffering a little in consequence. So the German Academies today are not high pressure hot-Gospel centres, nor are they formal schools or colleges. They are meeting

\* There are eighteen Academies, including four in the Soviet Zone, plus two rather specialised colleges, Haus Villigst at Schwerte in the Ruhr, and a Social Academy at Friedewald, near Siegen. Further details are pleasantly presented in a World Council of Churches pamphlet, *Signs of Renewal*, obtainable from 10 Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1, at 3s. 6d.

places for laymen, holding a series of short week-end or seven-day conferences, and acting as centres for outspoken discussion and argument. To use the jargon of their own booklets, they offer a "dialogue" between the Church and the world; and they aim to be places where church leaders can learn as well as teach. The primary aim of the Academies has always been to make real contact with the three groups of people which the Church in Germany lost during the first half of the twentieth century, the intellectuals, the organised workers, and youth. Most of their courses are designed for such people: here for instance is a list of some of the Bad Boll conferences held in recent months:

Pressure Groups and the Politician's Conscience (for Burgomasters);  
 The Church and German Re-armament (for ex-soldiers);  
 Freedom and Democracy in Western Germany (for refugees);  
 The Word of God and the word of the Press (for journalists);  
 Marriage—life's most difficult examination! (for students);  
 Tasks of the Elite in a Responsible Society (also for students);  
 Management: the claims of workers and owners (for industrial managers);  
 Prestige as a motive in collective bargaining (for managers and shop stewards);  
 Automation and our place in Industry (for trade unionists);  
 Is Culture just the religion of the middle class? (for young students);  
 Does the welfare state threaten human dignity? (for young workers);  
 Jazz and the Academies! (for young workers).

There is a continual emphasis on vocational problems, and on the real ethical struggles of modern life. There is a special appeal to the *Randsiedler*, the people on the threshold of the Church, to make them alive to the relevance of Christianity to their daily life and work.

Numerically the Academies have achieved a good deal in their first ten years. It is estimated that some 750 conferences are held each year, with some 25,000 participants. Academy conferences attract important speakers, from President Heuss downwards; and the quality of their discussions is recognised throughout the country. Intellectuals speak with respect of Academy leaders and speakers even if they do not agree with them. There is a genuine willingness on the part of the German trade unions to send members along, and the Academies are certainly not a C.D.U. (i.e. Adenauer party) preserve. I have myself been present at an S.P.D. (Socialist) youth meeting in Berlin, where the local Academy director was a specially invited speaker. Young people are very willing to come to the Academies, and to speak up there; and some colleges like Loccum give 20 per cent of their time to such *Junge Generation* work.

It seems to me important that we should try to analyse the grounds for this success, and to see whether the Church as a whole can learn from these German experiments, which are now being so energetically

studied by European and American church leaders. British church people are still rather Victorian in their religious isolation from the rest of Christendom: even the World Council of Churches does not mean much to us, except for its refugee work. We may tend too easily to dismiss these German developments as a "reaction from Nazism" or as a kind of moral improvement work. I suggest in particular that the Academies have learnt three principles of laymen's work which are of general importance to our Church leaders in Britain.

First, the Academies meet the ordinary man of 1956 where he is. They talk about problems in which he is desperately interested. They are prepared to hear expert opinions on these matters—and to appoint staff who themselves are familiar with modern family life, modern economic problems, modern political rackets. The intellectual level of courses at Tutzing in Bavaria, at Berlin, and at the Social Academy at Friedewald is high; but at the same time the discussions there are not theologically and theoretically remote from modern life in Germany.

Second, they maintain a real frankness of discussion, and follow very sincerely their avowed aim of not declaring a rigid "Christian party line". More than once there has been the comment: "You can go to the Academies, for they don't try to convert you"—said in the sense that you are not "got at" by the staff, that they respect your integrity. At the same time, there is plenty of hard and fierce argument, and this tradition of blunt speaking comes from the inner core who started the Academies, Dr. Müller and his comrades in the Confessing Church under Hitler. Discussion on topics like German unity or military service are certainly not superficial and merely theoretical. I can recall an evening at Hofgeismar, near Kassel, where some East Germans most bitterly attacked their western brothers for more or less ignoring their problems—and, since I was there, blamed the British churches for making no effective protests about the Potsdam agreements! And the Academy leaders are often themselves involved professionally and publicly in topical and controversial questions. Dr. Müller is one of the storm centres of the German "right wing" churchmen; and less conservative leaders like Herr von Bismarck or Haus Villigst have not always found it possible to agree with him. Some church people in Germany are scandalised by such disagreements and mutter about C.D.U. influence at Friedewald or the Niemölle opinions to be found at Mulheim. No doubt the same kind of people have objected to the political opinions of Archbishop Temple or Dr. MacLeod. But how much better for the Church and for Germany that it should try, even at the cost of strained feelings, to enter actively into



the problems of modern Germany, than that it should become a refuge for pious huddles of elderly church people who "leave such questions to the politicians".

My third reason for the success of the Academies may seem at first sight a trivial one; but I suggest in all seriousness that it is of considerable importance. *The Academies know how to use material things to the Glory of God.* They know how to cadge money—lots of it—from church funds (the West German churches are relatively prosperous institutions), from business men (without incurring the animosity of the trade unions), and from government departments (who will offer grants-in-aid for youth work and the like). They know how to use this money in efficient organisation—the staff at Bad Boll is some sixty strong, and another twenty exist to co-ordinate the work of the Academies and the other colleges in Europe. They know how to spend wisely on fine new buildings and on effective publicity. And one of the great impressions which I have gained from visits to the Academies is that of their modern style of architecture and furniture (which is roughly what is called nowadays "contemporary"). Whether it is a question of a complete new building like the £200,000 Academy at Arnoldshain, or merely the purchase of light fittings and chairs for a less wealthy institute like the one in West Berlin, the Academies have learned to use a twentieth-century idiom, and to speak to the world through it. This is not altogether a matter of expense—though they are of course less handicapped in these matters than we are. In their lighting, their wallpaper, their furniture, and even their door knobs, so many British church buildings never come to terms with the modern world. Yet students accustomed to modern scientific laboratories, or workers from a new nylon factory, or young people accustomed to the new styles in their schools and offices need to be confronted with a Church which knows how to speak in a physical environment acceptable to them. And if we cannot afford new buildings, we can surely redecorate the old.

For some months now, the Academy leaders have been considering their next moves and their future policies. Bad Boll celebrated its tenth anniversary last autumn; and Loccum has just held a similar commemoration. The very success of the Academies has brought a number of problems, which are by no means easy to resolve. Indeed they are the problems which arise whenever laymen's work begins to prosper, and lay people begin to stay inside the Church and to criticise it, instead of leaving its doors at adolescence.

To start with, there is the familiar problem of the local parish, and the local parish minister. In Germany as often as in England or Scotland or in Switzerland, the local congregation may be socially conservative, elderly and set in pre-1939 or even pre-1914 traditions of piety and social gossip. The Academies certainly do not intend to start a new sect; indeed they only have young people or trade unionists for a few days at a time, and in theory these people must then go on to join actively in the work of their local churches. In practice how can they possibly do so? If they try, they will be considered radical, "political", and restless; yet if they stay away they suffer all the rootlessness and unhappiness of the "churchless" Christian. We may yet find that the Iona Community were entirely right when they concentrated from the start on the training of young clergy, who will not only allow but will expect the lay people to take a lead in the parish, and to put their trade union meetings before their choir practice. This problem is leading to much hard thinking in Academy circles; and in particular they are discussing whether they should consider it their duty to offer some continuing pastoral care to their visitors. There has been very much interest in Third Orders and similar laymen's organisations—during this last year there have been special conferences at Berlin and Tutzing—and the last conference of European Lay College leaders spent much time on this matter of "after care".

A second set of problems is related to this: what kind of worship should the Academies follow, and how far should they become religious communities themselves? The constantly shifting population of short-term colleges, and the psychological strain of being friendly to a new group each week-end, are problems which we know in this country; and there is some desire in Germany to include more long-term students in their work, as at Haus Villigst and at William Temple College at Rugby. On the question of worship, Dr. Müller has said: "Meditation by the man of to-day on the word of God must be stripped of paralysing solemnity" . . . but in my opinion this ideal has not always been realised. The style of the daily worship, the rather rigid use of Lutheran service books, remind one of the fussy use of almost incomprehensible Anglican collects at too many English youth meetings. If worship is to be central to daily life, it must be—at least for enquirers and newcomers to the Church—reasonably intelligible. Many German forms of worship are, like ours, too clerical and too tied to the nineteenth century to suit these visitors to the Academies; and here perhaps the admirably "modern" outlook of the Academy leaders needs to be more consistently worked out.

## Letters to the Editor

*We have received many letters from our readers, mainly about the Suez special issue of the C. N.-L. This issue was received very well—much better than the Editors expected. We sold about 1000 copies beyond our usual circulation and readers have sent in as gifts enough money to pay the whole cost of getting the special issue out. We are most grateful to our readers for their support and we are particularly grateful to those who expressed disagreement with our views and yet sent money. The great majority of the letters have, however, supported the views of the Editors. Only a few have expressed disagreement, and most of these have said that they found the special issue useful nonetheless.*

SIR,

In the first half of this century, ignorance, inhumanity and above all jealousy have been the vices which have bedevilled life in the Near East. To consider our own shortcomings first: the Balfour Declaration would never have been made if the Arabs had been as real people in Balfour's imagination as were the Jews. The bitter rivalries between the Arabs themselves have hardly been more bitter than the jealousies and mutual recriminations between ourselves and the French. Both we and the French have had frequent occasion to say, quite correctly, "yah, I told you so", or its equivalent in faintly diplomatic language. Now there is a danger that jealousy of the Americans will bedevil the situation for decades to come. If we can forget the past and look at the future nothing is more desirable for everybody concerned (except the Russians) than a strong lead from the United States. Very likely the Americans will not give such a lead. Their past criticisms and jealousy of ourselves play an important part in inhibiting them from doing so. But if, as may happen, President Eisenhower comes forward with statesmanlike and constructive proposals, let us at least try and make sure that our jealousy of the Americans does not make us grudge them the greatest share in the moral and material advantage that would accrue to us all from a better ordering of the affairs of this unhappy part of the world.

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE LAWRENCE.

Brockham End, Bath.

SIR,

May I briefly raise a few points about the Suez situation which I hope may interest some of your readers and which they may care to elaborate.



Obviously, what we call the Middle East is a geographical and racial area with its own community of interests. Into the heart of it we have inserted an alien culture. We did this, conniving at the forcible eviction of the Arabs from their homes, partly because we were not willing to take thousands of Jewish refugees into our own lands, and partly because we were in two minds about the validity of the prophetic belief, that the Jews were destined to return to Jerusalem. And now the position has become further complicated because, as a result of their industry, courage and self sacrifice, the Jewish settlers have won for themselves occupation rights which we are bound to respect. Is it not clear that we cannot possibly assist the Arab peoples to make their proper contribution to a new world civilisation unless somehow or other we make up our minds as to the role which the Israelite State is called upon to play? I know that it is dangerous even to suggest that the whole Palestine question should be reopened, but unless we do this, and investigate it frankly and searchingly in this country and in the United States, we shall only transfer the discussion of it to a less favourable area—the Middle East—where all its unsolved problems exacerbate the daily tasks of the common people.

Hitherto our vacillation has resulted in the Jews having to regard themselves as an armed garrison in the midst of a hostile territory. And all the time their aptitudes and energy specially qualify them for a task the successful performance of which would benefit the whole world. Ought we not to honour them (and ourselves) by asking them to conduct a vast laboratory experiment to “make the desert blossom like the rose”? By supplying them with all the capital required to employ modern techniques intensively within their present small area, and protecting them from outside interference, we should be giving them a function which is not incompatible with their traditional belief about their destiny.

Of course we must have oil, and the Suez Canal must function efficiently. But if some new way of operating the canal proves satisfactory—and we have already signified our willingness to try one out—ought we not also to agree to a similar change being made in our oil operations? Our present system of making separate contracts with each state may be correct, and certainly it has brought great profit to the states concerned. But it has resulted in our paying royalties amounting to over £400 per annum per head of the population in some areas, and practically nothing in others; and it has subjected the idea of Arab brotherhood to an intolerable strain. Nasser has been compared with Hitler, and with some justification. But one significant

resemblance between the two dictators does not seem to have been sufficiently emphasised. Nasser's Arab Empire would pool all oil royalties, and thus pave the way for a more rational development of the Middle East than our present arrangements permit. Like Hitler's National Socialism it really does offer remedies for certain ills which American and European capitalism at present ignore. Ought we not therefore to give every support to a counter proposition for a Commonwealth of Arab Nations, functioning on much the same lines as are now being suggested for a European Federation? Of course great obstacles would be encountered, and an Arab Federation would never be the same as a European one, but might not the West learn something from an economy which was not based on the idea that every natural resource which could be exploited should be exploited up to the limit. The Eastern mind is perhaps more inclined than the Western to ask "What ultimate good does all this technical development bring?"

What the West gives to the Middle East in return for its oil must always remain largely a matter for the "markets" to decide. But we cannot remain indifferent to the fact that increasingly we have been paying for our oil by sending armaments. And to some extent this is due to the fact that the armament industry has now become perhaps the most powerful single factor in our western economy! As our western armament industries are all wanting to make more armaments than we can use, a self-denying ordinance to refrain from sending any arms to the Middle East might hit us appreciably. But ought we not to consider the possibility of some such arrangement and might it not perhaps prove a useful move in the direction of world disarmament, especially if the United Nations intervention in Egypt by its efficacy now gives support to the idea that individual nations are no longer compelled to rely entirely upon their own armies for the defence of their rights?

Last but not least an entirely new approach must be made to the tragic problem of the Arab refugee. It is not always recognised how much has already been done in the name of the United Nations to help these unfortunate outcasts. But the part which the U.S.A. and this country (and the Christian Church throughout the world) have played in this work has up till now been so preponderating that it constitutes a standing reproach to the United Nations Assembly, and to the Arab nations as well!

I am aware that by selecting and stating my questions as I have done I lay myself open to the charge of being unrealistic. The events of the past few weeks have made our British economy look more precarious

than ever, and instead of being able generously to assist the Middle East it may well be that we shall soon find ourselves quite unable to support the Welfare State we have so laboriously constructed. But if we apply courage and imagination on this scale to the solution of our Middle Eastern problems, is it not likely that these qualities will show themselves when we come to tackle our domestic ones? We shall need them!

Yours sincerely,

T. M. HERON.

76 Brockswood Lane,  
Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

DEAR MR. LAWRENCE,

Thank you for your special issue.

I am one of those who have had the divisions in the country (over Suez) duplicated in my own mind. On one side is the trust I share with many of his constituents, both Labour and Conservatives, in Mr. Butler; and on the other, the work as one of their hostesses that I have done for the East and West Friendship Council. From my experiences with coloured students I know the almost certain reaction of the whole coloured world to our intervention.

I began by feeling dreadfully ashamed, but have gone on to being—just sad. As time has gone on I do think that it is becoming clearer that the issues which determined the Government's action were greater than we were first allowed to know. And the coloured races may yet thank us if we can prevent them coming under the complete dominance of Russia, now that they have Hungary before their eyes.

I think that we can liken the situation to a surgeon deciding to operate to save a patient's life—but being unable to tell him he is going to do so, or to get his consent, or the operation would not succeed. Once the operation has begun it is vital for the patient that everything should be done to help it succeed. We have to move from where things are *now*, not from where they were before the Government's action. That is the sense in which the action can be vindicated, as "right" if it is "successful".

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) JOAN M. CATTLEY.

Twins, Pebmarsh, Halstead,  
Essex.

DEAR SIR,

I send you a small cheque, as requested, towards the cost of your special issue although I see no justification whatever for your claim that it is a Christian view. It seems to me that you have merely written an article in support of one side in a controversy, like any other newspaper, without any special relationship to Christianity or any other religion.

Yours faithfully,

R. W. OLDHAM.

Stroods House,  
Nr. Uckfield, Sussex.



DEAR SIR,

I have received and read with care your special issue of the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER. You are, of course, as individuals entitled to express your views, but I must express my regret that you should use the authority of editorship to issue a document which contains a long series of political arguments, which you are perfectly entitled to use, but with which others are equally entitled to disagree, and then to characterise this as "a Christian view". It is, of course, nothing of the kind, but a statement of the views held on some very complex international problems by two individual Christians.

The quotation from the Archbishop at the head of your letter is bound to carry the implication, whether intended or not, that here is the Christian view of the matter. From what I know of the Archbishop I do not think he would claim to be doing anything more than stating his own personal views. Simplification does not necessarily make for clarity and some of us at least hold that his is a gross over simplification and correspondingly misleading. The use of the Archbishop's statement as a preface to your own argument, with its authoritarian implication, is greatly to be regretted.

Finally you urge people to move their churches to call "emergency meetings about Suez". That is an invitation to those who disagree with the policy of the Government, since those who agree will see no reason for such action.

I respect your sincerity, but I do not think it is possible to take any other view of your document than that it is intended, despite the disclaimer about "a" and "the" to persuade Christians that this is what, *as Christians*, they ought to think. I do not think I shall be alone in regarding this as unwarrantable.

Yours sincerely,

HUBERT SECRETAN.

215 East Dulwich Grove,  
S.E.22.

*(Several readers have written saying that the Archbishop has simplified to the point of distortion. As I have tried to make clear in my editorial remarks, I believe that it is both our duty and our supreme interest to strengthen the embryonic system of international order that is emerging. I expect that the goal will only be attained by slow degrees and at a terrible cost. And I agree that it is too soon to speak of an international rule of law. But I believe that it is the nature of order to evolve into law. And we ought to look ahead boldly. So I still think that the Archbishop was right to single out as the one decisive point that "Egypt is at present within her own borders. Israel is out of bounds and the British and French Governments propose to be out of bounds also". It was hard on Israel and on ourselves and on the French to be called aggressors when we had been so hardly used by Nasser but that is not the point. "Hard cases make bad law." But if the Archbishop was right on the essential point, I am not prepared to defend his dictum quoted in the C.N.-L. Special Issue that "most of the troubles in this*

*world are due to the fact that people will not stick to the one point that has to be dealt with, but bring into consideration, and therefore confusion, every other conceivable related point". Many readers have pointed out that in most situations one has to take into account many circumstances, which are not all of equal importance. Indeed His Grace has shown in other contexts that he has a clear grasp of this. But I must plead guilty to having quoted the Archbishop without making this point clear.—J.W.L.)*

DEAR SIR,

There appears so much in common between the purpose and attitude expressed in the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER and that found in the writings of Professor Arnold Toynbee that I was most interested in the inclusion, in two issues of the Letter of the last chapter of Toynbee's Gifford Lectures. I should like to raise the question how far those in sympathy with the Frontier outlook can accept Toynbee's statement of that "policy", or "counsel", common, he asserts, to Christianity and Mahayana Buddhism: the counsel: Extinguish self-centred desires.

In the paragraphs in which this statement occurs (CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER April 1956, p. 11) Toynbee distinguishes human desires into two opposite groups: desires where the object is regarded as an "it" to be exploited "for the greedy self's own satisfaction" and "self-sacrificing" desires where the object is a "thou" for whose sake suffering to the utmost degree is accepted. This grouping by extremes leaves out of account all those mixed human desires to which neither description applies, and we are left asking: what is the counsel in regard to these which Toynbee would have his readers accept as Christian teaching.

If we compare with this passage in his last chapter Toynbee's introductory discussion of the historian's standpoint, we find him describing a continual effort to overcome natural self-centredness, and to "widen the mental horizon" through the close, continuous and imaginative study of records, enabling the student to recognise the reality of other lives with claims valid as his own.

Am I right in thinking that it is a counsel to widen, through such imaginative sympathy, self-centred desires, rather than to extinguish them, that the Editors of the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER would have its readers accept as Christian teaching? The point seems of special importance when our aim is "to explore the practical influence of our faith" in regard to such subjects as politics, education. For certain individuals a special vocation or concern may require the sacrifice of all natural self-regarding aims, but this cannot be true of the average individual in his relation to political action. In relation to national, or other secular collective action the exercise or the failure of sympathetic imagination extending and enlightening natural collective self-interest must be deemed to be—as the Editors say, considering in the April Letter (p. 1) the Government's action in Cyprus—"almost the same thing" as the exercise or failure of Christian love.

The counsel to strive for such enlightenment is in line—as the other counsel is not—with the teaching of present-day psychologists who insist that our instinctive self-centred cravings influence us only more insiduously if we seek to extinguish

them, while if made conscious and accepted in their full context of feeling, they may be integrated in activities valuable to self and others.

Yours faithfully,

MAUD BODKIN.

16 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City,  
Herts.

*(Yes, that is what I was trying to say. The theological justification for starting from a self-regarding aspiration in the soul is, I think, to be found in St. Bernard's wonderful little treatise "On the Love of God"; a good modern translation is published by Mowbray's.—J.W.L.)*

## Points from Letters

MR. Y. Z. SHEK, First Secretary of the Israeli Embassy, writes:

I have given the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER careful reading and have a sincere understanding of the legal point of view expressed in defining the word "aggressor". Nevertheless, I feel that this is a simplification of the legal aspect. The definition given might have been correct had the recent Israel campaign in Sinai been an isolated action. But for the past eight years Egypt has proclaimed that she is in a state of war with Israel and acted accordingly. Moreover, she has consistently refused every peace offer made to her by the Government of Israel. It is true that the News-Letter mentions provocations to which Israel has been subjected by Egypt over the years, but I fear that the consequences of this continual aggression are not fully evaluated in it. Our casualties in killed and wounded since the fedayeen offensive started (in the summer of 1955) amounted to 465. If one makes a comparison between the population of the State of Israel (one and a half million) and the population of Great Britain (about fifty million), this figure would be comparable to nearly 16,000 British subjects killed or wounded in a little over fourteen months. In addition, there have been 26,000 acts of armed robbery and theft and 172 cases of sabotage perpetrated by Egypt. I have no doubt of what the people of Great Britain would expect the Government to do to protect their lives and property.

MISS I. WINGATE writes:

Those of us with a knowledge of the East were not surprised that Egypt could operate with far less "efficiency" than the west demands. They have a capacity to make things work which we'd throw on the scrap heap. No doubt in time lower standards would follow. Also no doubt once things had settled down with Nasser left master of the Canal we should experience great difficulties. He is unlikely to have any conception of impartiality; "unavoidable" delays and obstructions of all sorts would doubtless be our portion. Almost impossible to prove deliberate; so it is easy to understand that our Government felt unable to accept the situation which seemed developing. . . .

But what is worrying is that the reasons given publicly do not make sense.



REV. A. J. BEACH writes:

Thank you for your special issue. As one who has read the correspondence in *The Times* on the subject of the Middle East, and whose political thinking has on the whole tended to be Left rather than Right, I must say how profoundly I disagree with you.

The present agitation against the Government policy is doing as much harm to the establishment of Law and Order in the world as did the militant pacificism of the early 1930s. In both cases the leaders have the highest ideals and they often have the backing of the great number of people who being lovers of peace (as we all are) easily slip into the position of peace at any price.

As so often in life we have to take the next step in the direction of the ideal. That I believe the Government did. Taking into consideration all the factors there was I maintain no other action they could have taken.

## An Ecumenical Week at Dunford

Encouraged by the success of last September's study-discussion-cum-holiday week on Foundations of Christian Unity, and by the fact that a weekend on similar lines planned for January is fully booked, we are making further plans. A second "week" will be held next summer, from 31st August—7th September, at Dunford. A main topic will be a study of some of the devotional literature of our separated traditions, and of the different patterns of holy living we aspire to, and of the ways in which we foster them. Further details of the programme will be available on application.

Also under consideration is the possibility of a week's reading party and holiday, 7th-14th September, on "Contemporary Thought and Christian Faith" led by Dr. J. H. Oldham. Those interested in either event should write to the Bursar, the Rev. R. G. Bliss, Dunford, Midhurst, Sussex, who will accept preliminary bookings and also send details when available. He will also accept bookings for holidays at Dunford for the last fortnight of August and the last fortnight of September.

KATHLEEN BLISS

JOHN LAWRENCE

# Frontier Chronicle

## A New Kind of Kirchentag?

One of the great problems of each recent German *Kirchentag*, or Laymen's Church Congress, has always been the size of the different meetings and study groups. Many observers, while admiring the organisation of these giant assemblies have criticised the tendency for lay-people to listen, attentively but more or less passively, while notable clergy exhort them through efficient loud-speaker systems. There are very welcome signs that as the "Kirchentag idea" spreads over Europe, new techniques are being adopted in order to achieve genuine opportunities for lay discussion and argument.

The first French *Kirchentag*—or *Rassemblement Protestant*—was held at Strasbourg this last October. It began on the Friday with the usual opening service: it closed on the Sunday afternoon with an impressive demonstration of some 50,000 people, who listened with incredible patience to some two and half hours of addresses. (If you decide, on grounds of Christian charity, to have a bilingual congress with full translations of everything, you should surely fix a rigid time limit to ecumenical eloquence?) But on the Saturday the great halls of the Strasbourg trade fair grounds were almost empty, and seemed almost as if the whole week-end was going to be a failure—until it became clear that in all the corners and all the committee rooms small groups of people were energetically talking and arguing among themselves.

And this was the heart of the Congress, a day of small study groups whose numbers had been most strictly limited, with only one or two delegates from each of the Alsace and Lorraine parishes, and with lay-people speaking up in a refreshing and almost startling way.

Similar plans are being made for the next French *Rassemblement*, which is planned for next May at Royan (Charente-Maritime), and for the first Scottish *Kirk Week*, which is to be held next August in Aberdeen. The Scottish organisers are determined to limit very severely the number of delegates; and it is hoped to arrange something like a hundred discussion groups of about thirty people each, with a lay chairman for each. The problems of splitting up the colossal German meetings into such small groups are tremendous; and in any case the 1957 meetings, which are provisionally fixed for Erfurt in Eastern Germany, may be subject to such police supervision that it becomes impossible to hold a large number of informal meetings. But the regional *Kirchentag* which has been suggested for Kaiserslautern next September would give a valuable opportunity for experiments; and it is greatly to be hoped that the next West German congress—which is already planned for Munich in 1959—will not only include the usual mass rally at the close—which is a genuinely inspiring experience for very many participants—but also a multitude of small groups during the week before.

## Charitable Confusions

One of the most heartening developments in the last few weeks has been the response of people in this country to the appeals for Hungarian refugees.

This has been quick and generous.

This sudden flood of public and private charity has incidentally exaggerated a very real problem of organisa-

tion in our help to refugees. Even before the Budapest fighting, there was a veritable jungle of different refugee appeals and societies, often competing in fairly friendly terms with each other, and only loosely co-ordinated in a joint standing conference. A temporary lull in their appeals was arranged in order to clear the way for the United Nations campaign for refugees (which has itself been confused by many people with the Hungarian appeals); but it seems likely that 1957 may see a distinct aggravation of the problem.

In these circumstances it is worth while emphasising two things. One is that the trials of the non-Hungarian refugees in Europe need to be remembered. Many of these have been in huts and barracks since 1945—and last knew settled home life some *fifteen years ago*. Others escaped from Eastern Europe at any time during the last twelve years. They must be watching the “queue-jumping” of the Hungarians with very mixed feelings; and though it is easy to see that a young and fit Budapest engineer is much more likely to get a visa quickly than an elderly and tubercular Latvian professor of music, we do well to watch the plight of these veteran “forgotten people”. It is also important to recall that the Church has *never* deserted these unfortunates: the

World Council of Churches and our British *Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service* long ago agreed to keep on helping them as long as they are in the camps. And for this permanent obligation, Inter-Church Aid relies on regular and systematic giving from Christian people, whether or not there is a special emergency splashed across the national press. It would be a sorry business if our admirable gifts to the Hungarians meant that Inter-Church Aid was deprived of an adequate income for 1957.

We may also suspect, not entirely in a cynical spirit, that the general public concern for the Hungarian refugees may perhaps fade a little before all the problems are solved. There will be a difficult and not-to-be-forgotten residue in the Austrian camps during most of 1957 and perhaps into 1958. And who now recalls the army of Korean refugees and orphans? Fortunately financial aid from the United States government and the United Nations relief agency has been available there on a fairly generous scale; but apart from this it is very largely the workers of the American Church World Service and—of course—a small but first-class group of Quakers who are still working for the victims of *that* emergency.

### A Case for Investigation

Another way in which many veteran refugees need assistance is in their fight for compensation for their sufferings under Hitler. The West German government and parliament have in theory accepted responsibility for them and have offered some kind of monetary compensation for what they lost under the Nazi regime; but there are very many loopholes in the law dealing with this, which was finally passed in 1953. It is to be feared that some of these were intentional, for an amending

measure proposed recently never passed the *Bundestag*.

Most Jewish sufferers in concentration camps and the like—at least those few who survived to make their claims—have already gained some slight compensation for their treatment, largely because of the well organised pressure of world Jewish opinion during the early days of the Bonn government. A considerable number of others, sick, crippled and elderly, are still finding the law and the courts effectively blocking



their claims. West Germany is now a prosperous country, surely able to afford the payment of compensation for these wretched survivors of past nightmares: it will do great harm to her reputation if the feeling persists that there

is some kind of shabby conspiracy to deny these people their rights. Nevertheless, the technical details are complicated and difficult to assess: it would be an admirable thing if the German churches would investigate the whole matter.

### Finding the Frontiers in Scandinavia

Two welcome developments are reported from Scandinavia. In Copenhagen last month a new Ecumenical Institute was opened under the leadership of Professor K. E. Skydsgaard. It will include a scholarly library and will act as a centre for ecumenical studies. At about the same time the ambitions of a small group of keen Norwegian laymen was realised by the formal foundation of a new Norwegian Church Academy at Frederiksborg, near Oslo. The Rev. Odd Ogdal, chairman of the new Academy's executive committee, declared that it would "enter into open and honest confrontation between Christianity and cultural life". It is intended to work in co-operation with all parts of the Church in Norway, and to link up with similar academies in Germany and elsewhere.

Another attempt to relate Scandinavian church life to the modern world is reported from Sweden, where there is a growing desire to change some of the traditional theological college

curricula. The comments of Bishop Giertz of Göteborg on this question point raise questions which relate to more than Swedish theological students. He said:

"When a theological candidate enters upon his service in the Church, he knows more about the reasons compelling the Puritans to go to America than about the reasons driving young people from the country to the cities. Great sections of his congregation live in a world unknown to him . . . The Church has had its deepest roots in communities of peasants, and even if human problems are fundamentally the same for people in former days and to-day, the Church and its servants must make themselves acquainted with the actual conditions in the modern world. . . Academic theological training is exclusively concerned with the past, so that a clergyman receives more knowledge about life in a medieval monastery than in a modern factory."

### Without Comment

The *Africa Digest* reports:

"The Medical Council of South Africa has decided to introduce *apartheid* between black and white blood, with black labels for bottles of blood of Non-Europeans and white labels for the other. This decision aroused much criticism in the English-speaking press, and the Southern Transvaal branch of the Medical Association proposed a

motion expressing no confidence in the Council. An editorial in the journal *Medical Proceedings* said that blood *apartheid* would expose the South African medical profession to the scorn and ridicule of the civilised world. Two hundred medical students at Cape Town University also expressed concern."

M.G.

# Only One Way Left

Dr. G. F. MacLeod's new book, *Only One Way Left* (The Iona Community Publishing Department, 214 Clyde Street, Glasgow, C 10s. 6d.), is a book to be read, not to hear about through review. Here is the authentic flavour of the Iona Community, with the author's personality to challenge you in every page from its title to its final paragraphs. As always, he will disturb, delight and occasionally infuriate his readers. But unless you are very dumb, the book will give you a healthy pain in the mind, and you are strongly urged to get a copy for yourself.

Here are some examples of his plain speaking . . .

"But the darkness of our present plight can also be projected in a story. An Oxford scholar and convinced Christian, with a brilliant career half completed in the Colonial Service, threw it up to run a Boys' Club in London. Appalled by the complete aimlessness of even his most senior and responsible lads, he embarked on a course of twenty instructions on succeeding Sunday nights. He gave the Christian answer to 'Who am I?' over against all the other answers, spoken and unspoken, that mould the conduct of youth in a modern city. Rest assured he knew the answer, spoke in their own language, and obeyed all the laws of 'communication'. Thirty young men embarked on the course. At the end there were only seven. Finally he asked Bill, the ablest of the stickers, 'Have I proved my case?' 'Yes, sir', said Bill, 'you have proved it up to the hilt: *and it doesn't mean a thing*' (pp. 41-42).

\* \* \*

"It is no good saying with a passionate gleam in the eye, 'there is one solution for Africa—One Faith, One Lord, One Baptism', and then moving at a snail's pace about Church Unity there, where there are 269 registered Christian denominations. *There* is a problem of God's Community. It is no use saying of Kenya: 'What is wanted there is a Christian conviction such as only the West can give', and then going at a snail's pace about the fact that the average European income there is some £600 a year; and the average income of such Africans as are industrial workers is less than £50 a year. *There* is a problem of God's Community. It is because we put the problems of God's Community second that increasingly folk will continue to be restless. Restless till they rest in Him. And to rest in God is not to ascend to some high spiritual mysticism. To rest in God is to be lost in the Community that we may be found in Him" (p. 53).

\* \* \*

"The soul, in popular conception, is already a kind of canary cooped in the cage of real life. The evangelist, in popular conception, arrives with small portions of banana which he deftly endeavours to pass through the bars of real life in the accidental hope of contacting the mouth of the canary. Too often he leaves the house unsatisfied, claiming the inhabitants irreligious . . . I do not blame the boy who, from his experience in a certain Sunday school, misquoted the text to read, 'He came that we might have life, and have it *moribundantly*'" (p. 140). M. G.

# God, Man and the Land

## *The Theology of Agricultural Missions*

STEPHEN CARR

For most unsophisticated peoples God, Man and the Earth are the three primacies of human life and their interrelationship is seen as being both intimate and vital. In many parts of Africa seed is never sown without divine blessing being sought for it, and this is no mere formality for it is considered that the crop cannot prosper unless such ritual is observed. The harvest feasts are often the biggest of the year when generous gifts are given to the spirits for their blessing upon the fruits of the field. To these people the supernatural, be it God, gods or spirits, is entirely responsible for the productivity of the crops which they plant. The older generation of Igbos in Nigeria will always, in my experience, say that God has given them a good crop of yams, not "I have grown a good crop of yams". This is no studied nicety or thoughtless formality but a genuine expression of deep-rooted belief! God directly controls the fruitfulness of the earth and all farming activities must be accompanied by sacrifice, rituals or prayer if they are to succeed.

How close all this is to Old Testament thinking. It is God who makes the earth yield its increase, who makes the cattle multiply, the vine flourish, and the valleys stand thick with corn. When Israel strays from the Lord the prophets give warning of poor yields and hungry times. If Israel repents there is the promise of abundance, and the Messianic prophecies themselves in Amos and Zechariah are linked with the promise of abundant harvests, finding its culmination in the final verses of Amos when it is promised that the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed. Not only is God seen as responsible for all the phenomena which control the farmer's fortune, but people's behaviour results in God's giving or withholding the fruitfulness of the earth.

Where in this picture of the close relationship of God, man and the earth, does the thinking of the Western Church fit? Does it fit at all? It is a Church made up of people who feel increasingly that they are in control of natural phenomena. Floods, pests, diseases and even rainfall are controlled to greater or lesser degree, and the direct influence of God upon specific crops or herds is not seriously thought of by many Western farmers. There are few farmers in England to-day who would spontaneously and sincerely say "God gave me a good crop of barley



in the seven acre this year". Most of us are not fully convinced about prayers for rain; and we are uneasily conscious of our lack of deep thinking about God's relationship to our farms when we sing traditional harvest hymns at the end of a miserable and heart-breaking week of harvest.

Yet the Christian missionary in Africa or India cannot afford to relegate the "Theology of the Soil" to the limbo of half thought out concepts which are but seldom stirred and quickly re-shelved. In some way he must relate the message of God in Christ to the basis of life on the soil and the farming pattern.

One might say that there has been a move in England towards a greater integration of Church and farm life. The Rogation services in which the fields are blessed in spring-time and services of blessing for ploughs and animals have gained in popularity in recent years. To what degree these meet a deep seated desire on the part of country folk or whether they merely satisfy a superficial sentiment it is not for me to assess. One wonders, however, how many farmers would accord in their heart of hearts with the labourer who commented as an aside at a Rogation service "This field needs ten tons of muck to the acre not a church service". Do most people in England believe that the blessed field will be more fruitful, the blessed plough more "efficient", the blessed animals more productive? Until we have deepened our thinking about the significance of these services, their export in a modified form with no basic theology underlying them will not meet the needs of people in the younger Churches to whom this whole matter is more crucial than it is to most in the West to-day.

### The Redeemed Community

I frankly admit that the direct intervention of God into the realm of soil and animal fertility, as it is suggested in the Old Testament, is not a subject upon which I would feel able to give concrete guidance to an African. Rather I stand to learn from his faith. But there remains however a different aspect of God's intervention in the realm of soil and farming, which I believe is distinctively Christian and the acceptance of which would make a great difference to the rural Church in all parts of the world. It is the redemption of the natural order in farming *through the redeemed community*. The use by God of His faithful and obedient children to deliver the creation from "the bondage of corruption".

To me this is delightfully illustrated in a charming story of Paul Gallico's called "Ludmillia" which forms a simple starting point to

broader thinking along these lines. The story is of an unthrifty cow belonging to a poor peasant whose livelihood depends upon it. Its poor yields are leading the family into poverty and the priest is moved to pray for the cow that it might yield more abundantly. The following day the cow's yield becomes enormous and in a matter of days it yields as much as its fellows give in a lactation. The hierarchy and people praise God for a miracle and every one is very happy. The cowherd is sceptical, however, and eventually finds that on the day when the miraculous flow of milk began his daughter had taken the cow grazing in a remote village, never before visited by the cowherds. He goes to it and finds it carpeted with a herb known to stimulate milk production. The cow had eaten more in a day than the average cow would find in a lifetime. So much for God's intervention! So much for miracles! Exultant he goes to the priest and unfolds his story. The priest remains unperturbed. Why on that day for the first time had the cow been entrusted to the child? What had led the child to go to so remote and deserted a spot? What had given the child the courage to follow an inward urge to go to a place of which she would normally be terrified? Here is your miracle—not a direct intervention by God into the mammary glands of a cow, but the using of a human instrument in answer to faithful prayer. Should not our worship and the services which mark the peaks of the farming year tend much more to be services of the dedication of those who work the land that in obedience to God's will and in the strength which He gives them, redeemed men may be the mediators of redemption to the created world with which they deal. Let us indeed remember and stress the omnipotence of God, but also bear in mind that according to the witness of Jesus, He sends his rain on the just and the unjust alike, and that it is through *men* that particular blessings are often given.

But let us start with beginnings. "God called the dry land Earth . . . and God saw that it was good." As we look at the black earth soils of prairies, steppes, or pampas, or at the wonderful balance of vegetation on the thin soil of a chalk down or at the luxuriance of a tropical forest, we also can say that it is good. And, as with all living things, when we study the soil in greater detail and come to appreciate more of its immense complexity, we are drawn to a greater awe of its Maker.

To Bacon and Helmont in the seventeenth century the soil was a dead substance serving solely to keep plants upright whilst they were nourished by water. Even to Liebig, Lawes and Gilbert, the giants of nineteenth-century soil science, the soil was dead and constituted little

more than a medium for supplying plants with inorganic salts, so that all the questions which the soil poses were believed to have answers at the level of chemistry. To-day we are beginning to see something of the highly complex nature of the soil and the plant's relation to it. The vast bacteriological population and its interaction with other soil organisms affords to the scientist an immense field for study and research. The vital importance of minor elements, their relationships and their response to soil acidity, and other soil phenomena are the subjects the size of which makes the soil scientist of to-day far less dogmatic than his predecessor of fifty years ago. Again the discovery in America by Wollny and King of the importance of soil colloids to soil fertility has brought to light the fundamental importance of physical factors in the soil.

To the Christian, who cares, these discoveries and his own experience of the wonder of the soil afford all that is needed to bring him to his knees in worship of its Creator and at the same time to make him marvel at the responsibility of the stewardship committed to his charge when God has given him dominion over all the earth.

And as we turn from God the Creator of the soil to man its steward we come face to face with the Fall. As one looks at the deep red canyons gullyng the hillsides for miles in Eastern Nigeria, as one looks at the sheet erosion on so much of the sloping land in East Africa, as one reads of the advance of the desert in Australia or hears the story of the plundering of vast areas of black prairie soil in North America, one is faced with a great deal that is far from being good.

It would be foolish to attribute all the poor and eroded land in the world to-day to the sinfulness of men; and I am in no position to propound a neat theory of the Fall of the Natural Order. What we can see is that by his selfishness, his lack of responsibility and his laziness, man brings about the fall of the earth from its state of goodness.

It is possible in a new country to get rich quick by mining soil fertility stored up over the centuries by a few years of continuous cropping on a basis of all take and no give, completely ignoring the basic principles of sound husbandry. Men, in their selfishness, do it, and the earth and future generations of men suffer for it. It is very easy to clear a patch of scrub for cultivation by setting fire to it, and if the fire spreads from the two acres one wishes to clear to another two thousand acres of scrub in which one is not interested, why worry? Vast tracts of Africa suffer from this uncontrolled annual burning to-day. Sand that should be carrying forest carries only scrub, a year by year the young tree seedlings are burnt. As a result, earth



at should be storing up great reserves of humus for the use of future generations gets slowly poorer as the vegetation which should form humus goes up in smoke. Man, unconcerned for the good of land which is surplus to his immediate requirements, unconcerned also for the good of men yet unborn, squanders the earth over which he has been made a steward.

It is easier to clear a piece of sloping land of its natural cover and cultivate for three or four years until the best has been washed away than to make contour bunds and terraces to prevent soil erosion. Man, in his laziness, does this and the results can be seen the world over. They are becoming particularly apparent in tropical Africa to-day as population pressure increases and more and more hilly land is taken into cultivation attesting to a fallen creation stemming from a fallen man.

### A Missionary Concern

The blame must not appear to fall upon the shoulders of the farmer only. Often the economic pressures of an unredeemed society force the farmer into a policy of all take and no give, as the sole alternative to bankruptcy. In many cases also the spoiling of the earth is done in ignorance by people whose traditional methods of cultivation have been disrupted by economic pressure or by a sudden large increase in population. Here the blame lies with those who have the technical knowledge which would help and are either unwilling to involve the sacrifice demanded in sharing it, or else allow condescension of attitude to raise up such barriers in the hearts and minds of those to whom they go that their work is without effect. Surely at this point we are coming very close to the missionary movement of the Church and its shortcomings, as we compare the startling effect which its medical work has had upon population with its comparative unconcern for agricultural development until very recent years.

As, however, we acknowledge the fact of the Fall of man and our own part in that, so we are assured of the availability of a complete redemption. I once visited an area of very serious gulley erosion in Nigeria where canyons three hundred feet deep had been washed out of the land. An erosion control officer had been trying to get the people to check it but had received very little co-operation in the making of bunds and the planting of trees. An old man sitting in a sacrificial urine said to me "You Europeans don't know about these things. This thing comes from the spirits and it is not going to stop until we make the right sacrifice to the spirits". A large heap of bones behind

him bore witness to his efforts. The students who were with me either laughed or lamented the lack of education of the older generation. Yet surely the old man had got something of the right perspective. The prime cause was spiritual and not physical and the redemption of the situation did not lie basically or solely with the European bunds and trees. Here was a failure in stewardship and in consequence sin. Here was the wrath of God being made apparent in the natural consequences of disobeying His laws in nature. Here was the need for sacrificial repentance and redemption.

Some would seek to buy the redemption of the soil with money. Indeed, heavy subsidies and generous grants are made in an attempt to make soil conservation and good husbandry attractive and profitable. But such solutions may not go to the root of the matter, if, when economic conditions change, unredeemed man will return to his old ways, the easier ways which bring short-term profit with no thought for the future.

At that point another path lies open. The land may be redeemed by coercion as it is being redeemed in Kikuyu country to-day. That does involve sacrifice. The sacrifice is the breaking of human relationships and the hardening of human hearts. The sacrifice is neither full, perfect or sufficient and the redemption which it achieves is tenuous depending as it does upon the continuing supremacy of the coercion and inspiring no hope of a fullness or perfection.

But a sacrifice has been made which is full, perfect and sufficient. A true redemption is available in Christ Jesus. The redemption is primarily of man. It is for his sin that the sacrifice has been made. He in turn, however, is made a mediator of redemption to the natural order. We do not have a picture here of God intervening directly to prevent soil erosion, increase humus supplies and to keep farms weeded. But we do see man being saved from selfishness, carelessness and laziness and the earth being saved from the ills which are the direct result of those sins. And the promise and the hope are twofold. There is the promise of a newness and of a salvation now and there is promise of perfection in time to come. If Isaiah 2 and Romans 8.18 have any meaning this promise extends not only for man but to the created order as it "waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God".

# Men Outside the Church

*the substance of an address by PASTOR HORST SYMANOWSKI to the  
mod of the Evangelical Church of Germany. Translated by Mary Bailey.*

Our subject is the industrial worker who has lost his connection with the Church. What can we do for him? What I have to say is based on my experiences over the last three years in three firms: a chemical factory with 4000 employees, a cement factory with 1400, and a paper business with 500, male and female employees. Five years ago I was taken on at the cement factory as an extra hand. Since then I have worked every year for weeks or months on end in the same factory, but each time in a different department. Since May 1954 the pastor in charge of the parish in which this factory is situated has worked here for four days a week and has had three days entirely free for his parish. Before this arrangement he worked for a year in a quarry belonging to the same firm. In both the other firms there are two Dutchmen employed, one a trained theologian who has worked there part-time for eighteen months, the other a student from the Church and World Institute in Gießen.

For the non-Churchgoer there is no connection between his working world and the Church. It is true that there is one between his personal and family world and the Church, but only in the frontier situations of birth (Baptism), growing up (Confirmation), marriage (Holy Matrimony) and death (Burial). These are the occasions in human life which are the objects of special rites in all religions. In any case, the appeal to the Church on these occasions cannot be used as a proof of any expression of Christian belief on the part of non-Churchgoers. True, they too talk of God, but to them He belongs to the religious sphere; here, He has nothing to do with everyday life, with work and play. Machines function just as well without God; production is a creation of man. God may be Lord in the religious sphere—in the Church—but not Man is the Lord of the world of work. Here is my daily life—religion over there; here is material reality—there, pious ideology; here is the hard struggle of life—there, unrealistic moral teaching. To sum up, here am I in my world—there is the Church outside the real events of daily life.

How can we make it clear to the non-Churchgoer that after the life and work of Jesus Christ there is no separation between God and Man? A statement in theological language is no help here. The preaching of Jesus Christ must take flesh here and now in the working world.



It is not enough that Church people should now and then express an interest in men's daily work, or enunciate a "Word for the Social Situation", or attempt to attract non-Churchgoers by evangelistic campaigns with doubtfully relevant themes. The incarnation of God took place in the world. Jesus Christ did not wait in the Temple for those who were interested in His message, but was found among those who were not attracted to the Temple. Our task, therefore, is not to find a way to call the non-Churchgoer back to the place where Christians gather and hold their services. On the contrary, in the step of this Jesus we must leave our established positions and stand at the side of the non-Churchgoer, the man who does not understand, the non-religious, yes, and the godless. It is not a question of defending and maintaining the Church, but of winning men to Christ. The Evanston report says, in Section II, "The first step in evangelism must always be not one of controversy, but of identification and aloneness". That means in the first place renouncing that exaggerated hectic activity which tries to convince the non-Churchgoer. Really our task is something quite simple; being there, standing by the other fellow in his world. It means loving one's neighbour in the world of work. I should like to translate this as—taking him seriously in his achievement, in his wish to improve his standard of living and ensure his material existence; taking him seriously in his fear of being always dependent on his firm or his trade union. The command to show love for one's neighbour holds good for all Christians who are themselves inside the world of work. But if they are not there, or do not carry out this service, then the officers of the Church must take on the job.

The first result of doing so will be to their own advantage. For here they learn to know the conditions that shape men's lives to-day in a much more lasting way than all the attempts by the Church to influence the outsider by occasional missionary undertakings or public pronouncements. Here they get to know man in his normal life, in his worldliness, and in his mistrust of all appeals that seek to "get him tied up". In the common life they begin to understand what a large section work takes out of the life of a factory hand, and how the rest of his time is divided between different sections—the family, further education, the union, sport, politics, pleasure, or the struggle for a home of one's own. With astonishment they will learn that the Church section is missing altogether, or is so small as to have no importance, or is kept only for special family occasions. They will see that the non-Churchgoer stubbornly resists any enlargement of the

urch section because such enlargement is only possible at the cost of other sections, and he doesn't want that. And we have found in the factory that we are in each other's hands, day in, day out, for eight hours or longer. There is, on the one hand, no retreat from the strange messenger of the Gospel, nor can the pastor retire to his pulpit and to the circle of those who (as a business man expressed it) "take his rest Sunday by Sunday without complaint". On the contrary, everything is meticulously examined and criticised.

I am often frightened when I think how much as a matter of course we call on our Church members to bear witness in this way. How aimless this working world must seem to us when we send our theological students into it "to get experience". In fact, this world is a battlefield, in which there is not only a struggle for one's job, one's proper food and one's daily bread, but also for the question of who can help man to preserve his decency and humanity. It is not easy in this working world to remain a Christian. Let no one think that one can go into this waste land so long neglected by the Church, to plant an ecclesiastical garden with all the usual theological and biblical tools. Among the factory chimneys there are no green pastures. Here we are asked questions to which we do not know the answers; here we are thrown into situations in which we do not know how to behave as Christians; here we stop speaking so glibly of holding fast in the world to our faith. I sympathise with the theological students who came out of the factory to me and said they did not want to study theology any more; *this* world could not be won by any preaching or any witness; and so they refused to be appointed by the Church to look after parishes, and spend their life and use their strength outside this, the greatest battlefield of to-day. We would surely have more theological students to-day if we showed them their task in the modern world of work and put them in the position to give them the necessary tools. Do you understand what it can mean to be at the mercy of this world? Do you understand why we cannot so easily say "*there* is the place of testing the laity, *our* place is in the pulpit"? It seems to us unrealistic and unmerciful to send our few working-class Christian brothers into a battlefield on which we officers of the Church have not yet appeared and have held our own so little.

I would like to show you from one quite simple example how little we reckon with the laws and customs of this world of work, and how little we can meet them from our experience as parish priests. People tell us in Church why we want to meet the industrial worker in his place of work particularly, instead of visiting him at home in his

family circle. But when I experience in my own person how the production of a factory controls my life with inescapable laws, and determines its rhythm, I understand that the worker is no longer master of his leisure, no more free to form his own home life. His own shift work, and that of his wife, his elder children, or other members of the family, allows no fixed leisure, no free evening in the old sense, often, too, no fixed day off in the week. There is often no longer any talk of Sundays or holidays in common. The modern process of production does not allow man to live any more in the natural rhythm of day and night, six-day week and Sabbath rest. His work is not directed by sun and moon, nor summer and winter. It has its own rhythm. Exactly what morning and evening prayer shall we teach the boys and girls who, in this rhythm, will soon be going to sleep in the morning, and working in the evening? What does it mean then the time for waking and sleeping, for working and resting, changing every eight or ten days with the change of shift? The rhythm of our Church life may, in the village and in particular classes, still correspond with the rhythm of nature and work, or at least they may not clash. But for the millions of men involved in the process of mass production there is *only* the other rhythm. But one cannot march in time between two bands playing in different rhythms. This is in fact a world of its own, which cannot be treated with techniques which proved their worth in the pre-industrial world.

This one example should show us that in many other ways it is not only the fault of the non-Churchgoing worker that the world of the Church is so far from his life. Is there any possibility at all of bringing these two worlds together? It is certain that the Church cannot force its rhythm on this world. But out of love for the men who are set against this rhythm she could stop making her own rhythm the necessary condition for a Christian Church life. She could try to share the rhythm of the men who are subject to this law. This attempt must begin by entering into this new world, by being there in the present. The English have briefly and pointedly described the task as "to be—not to act".

At this point many of you will have become restless. Does not faith come from preaching? Are we not a Church of the Word? Certainly, but of the Word which became flesh, and always presses towards incarnation, material form and body. Speaking and Being are not separated in our imitation of Jesus. Both belong together in the workshop too. Speech is an unartificial, inevitable result of our presence in the workshop. Please don't think now of religious conversations or discussions about God. We do not like them because they are general



so abstract. It is much more a question of a factual conversation, in which it is not necessary to change suddenly to Christian and Church topics. At Evanston it was said: "God's conversation with the Church is a conversation about the world. The Church must be ready to speak out to the world, if she wishes to speak with God. The world is the direct object of God's action". It is a widespread mistake among Church people, and non-Church people that God is only interested in religion. That is thinking in compartments. In work, I must be careful not to think like this. For it is not my job to enlarge the other person's Church compartment—rather, I myself must be tested to whether I only understand how to talk propaganda about God, or whether God is the centre of my life in this world of work also. It must be proved precisely in "secular" conversations, when we are talking about work, pay, one's colleagues and the boss, the office staff and the director, the demands of the firm and the demands of the union. So the factory siren becomes a call to the service ordained for us by God in this world. So we believe we go through the factory gate in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and do our work there and hold our conversations.

We think that this is a legitimate form of preaching—is the Word of God. Please imagine such talk as quite natural; it deals with the everyday questions of jobs, the family, the joys and the burdens of life, but always very concretely. In these "worldly" questions, the Word of God wants to take form. Hardly a shift passes without some form of group discussion, either in the production unit, the working committee, or in the group round the breakfast table. Not every form of industrial work provides the same opportunities. But there are only a few businesses in which such conversations are entirely impossible. Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes from prison: "I do not want to make man feel a worm in his worldliness, but to confront him with God at his strongest point". The place for that with the non-Churchgoer is his place of work. That is his strongest point.

But you will ask: "Where is our concern for the Word of the Bible, the direct preaching and hearing of the text? That exists in the working world, too. We didn't believe it ourselves. For years we have been trying to understand our secular workmates. Now they are beginning to take our worry and anxiety seriously. They have noticed what a difficulty our Sunday sermon is to us. At first they were surprised—but you've studied for it!" They then offered to discuss the next sermon with us. Recently we've been meeting in each other's houses. We bring our Bibles; we have to open them at the text, otherwise they

would not find it. Then the questioning begins: "Do you have to stick to the Bible? Why, exactly? What does this sentence mean? The one is quite unintelligible; can't you leave it out"? It is a mixed group, one has left the Church; another has his Church tax in the Roman Catholic column on his pay packet; a third has a religious interest, a kind of pantheism; another argues about the word of God to his own failings. It is doubtful if they will ever come to Church to hear what has come of "their" sermon. But should we be sorry about that when the Word of God has already been heard among them? But they allow themselves to be invited to our house, with the building of which they have been helping for years. Here we have a service with them but in quite a different form from the usual one. The service begins in the morning and ends in the evening. For we spend the whole day together, eat with one another, discuss in small groups what has been said, and talk together about the questions which interest us. We even have Sacraments in this group—so far, Baptism, Marriage, and Burial. The question of Communion is still open. There is no paragraph of Church order dealing with this form of Church life. But what the Ceylonese D. T. Niles said at Evanston, is always true.



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our work: "Our loyalty to Jesus Christ sets limits to our search for successful methods of evangelism; all the same, the love of God drives us to seek more successful methods for each human being".

But in reality it is not a question of method. That is not enough. To seek for methods would mean: "Everything is all right with us; we just haven't got the knack of bringing these outsiders into our fellowship". In fact it is a question of a fellowship, of a body, of the body of Jesus Christ. But not of the religious form of this body, but of its secular form. We are not concerned with the name "Christian", but with whether God's act of reconciliation happens in the world—in our case, in the modern working world. The witness to this act of God is not a religious, but a secular social event. It leads to a changed relation between men, between workers at their place of work, between them and the boss, between employer and employee, between man and wife, parents and children. So the witness to the God who loves the world and the worldly, becomes salt for the earth, the yeast which reserves and shapes society. In these changed relations between men, and in their finding of each other, the Church is born. To refer again to Section II of the Evanston report, it says, "Also wherever Christians find themselves separated by caste, class, racial and other barriers, they will boldly cross them, manifesting Christ's solidarity with the whole of mankind. In a divided world they will fulfil Christ's ministry of peace, manifesting in their own life, the new life which has begun in Jesus Christ. Without the Gospel the world is without sense; but without the world the Gospel is without reality".

This sentence cannot simply be uttered in the modern world as an assertion and a demand. It can only in humility be practised and witnessed to in this world of work. Is our Church in this world to-day? Is she confronting it? Who are these who are sent into this world? Who is ready to send them? Who to go? And what do we say when, as a result of such going out into the world of work, communities of new Christians are built, whose form calls the normal structure of the parish in question?

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*The third impression of PATERNOSTER, a meditation on the Lord's Prayer, first published as a supplement to the CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER in January 1941, is available from "The Christian Frontier", 59 Bryanston Street, London, W.1. Single copies, 3d. each; 2s. per dozen, post free.*

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C.N.L. No. 62



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# Book Reviews

## The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism

By Louis Bouyer. (Harvill 18s.)

This is a remarkable — indeed an unprecedented — book by a Roman Catholic theologian. Fr. Bouyer, who was a member of a Reformed church before he became a Catholic, and therefore had the qualification of experience in writing it (though that might as easily have been a *disqualification*), has a deep religious insight and a rare gift for theological analysis. The result is a study of the great spiritual movements of the Reformation which is profoundly sympathetic: it is likely to surprise nearly all Catholics and will be enlightening to most non-Catholic readers, even if they have read, for example, Troeltsch on Luther and Calvin. What it says about these great Reformers and the kind of devotional life they inspired is essential and affirmative and could hardly be bettered.

Of course the moral is drawn from the Roman Catholic standpoint. Fr. Bouyer's argument is, roughly, that the Protestants were fully justified in believing that they were recovering Christian truths that had become ossified or obscured during the decadence of the Mediaeval Church, but that they were also misled. Their thinking was distorted by the nominalism which had almost ousted the realism of Aquinas from the Christian climate of thought. We are given to understand that William of Ockham was the real danger in the woodpile. But this distortion did not diminish the value of the Reformers' recovery of the primacy of personal religion, which was mainly a re-emphasis upon what was best in the Catholic life of piety and devotion. Fr. Bouyer points to the striking parallel

(which has impressed other students of Reformation history) between Protestant and Catholic movements for the intensification of interior religion following upon the Reformation. In their conceptions of the Church's action upon the world, also, he notes the similarity between the conceptions of the Calvinists in Geneva and of the Jesuits in Paraguay. In fact, to this writer, the Reformers were, by intention, good Catholics though wrong-headed anti-papists. His accounts of several of the late Protestant men and movements are warmly sympathetic; but when he gets to Karl Barth he finds the theology of Protestantism, though still good in parts, driven by its pre-suppositions into an anti-ecclesiastical position which he regards as heretical and even absurd.

To expose the failure of Protestantism to frame the truths it re-discovered in a coherent body of doctrine about the Church is an easy task. Fr. Bouyer makes it a little too easy by taking no account of the creative influence of the Protestants upon a wider world after their separation—an influence which has not been inferior, morally or evangelically, to that of the Roman churches. Many would agree that, if we want the best ecclesiastical system the Romans have it—and, of course, we *do* want it; but after one tragic experience of the best being the enemy of the good, it will be hard indeed for the Church to put all its eggs in the same ecclesiological basket. Readers who are not of the Papal obedience will feel edified by the first part of this book but yet doubtful about its conclusions.

PHILIP MAIRET.

### The Christian Frontier in Greece

*The Waters of Marah. The present state of the Greek Church.* Peter Hammond (Rockliff. 21s.)

The tragic events in Cyprus, if they have done nothing else, have at least revealed the gulf between English and Greek ideas of the part the clergy should play in national life. In Greece the relations of Church and nation, and consequently the whole question of the Christian Frontier have to be thought of in radically different terms from those to which we are accustomed in the West. And it is one of the many virtues of Peter Hammond's book that it brings out so clearly the topsy-turvy, Alice-through-the-Looking-Glass quality of Greek Church life! Here is a Church, at once conservative and hierarchical, accusing the Roman Catholics of needless innovations and novelty, which at the same time gives to laymen a larger place in its life, whether as theologians, preachers or administrators, than does any Protestant body, a Church whose bishops at one moment seem the devoted servants of the state, and at the next, the revolutionary leaders of the people.

Although written more in the style of a travel book than of a scientific treatise, Mr. Hammond's book does in fact provide a great deal of information about the present state of the Greek Church, and its recent history, which is not otherwise available in English. It gives us a description of the new Christian movements which in the past thirty or forty years have played

so great a part in Greek Church life and which present interesting parallels with developments in the West. Some examples are also given, and this is of no less importance, a real insight into the aspects of Greek life which have been at least influenced by the West. We are presented with a picture of traditional ways of life still basic in Greece, but too often missed by the hurried visitor.

The mass of the people, especially in the country, remain Christian to a degree surprising to a Westerner, and the frontier problem consequently presents itself less as one of pure evangelism than of the promotion of Christian knowledge. The need is all the time for more and better preaching, and for good popular literature which will give content and life to the traditional attitudes of the people. The new movements, and above all the Zoni Brotherhood which forms the centre of a whole network of active organisations, publishing, organising Sunday school work, promoting Christian idealism in family life and training lay preachers, have worked valiantly to provide an answer to these needs, and to renew the life of a Church which for 400 years was cut off from the rest of Christendom. The comparison with the early days of Methodism is one that gives some impression of the enthusiasm and wholeheartedness of Zoe and its kindred organisations.

A. M. ALLCHIN

### Almost a Christian

*From Darkness to Light.* Victor Gollancz. (Gollancz. 15s.)

The strength of Victor Gollancz is not so much quality of thought as moral vigour and the ability to see clearly the difference between right and wrong. He has much more than this to offer but these stand out in

all his writings. Those who have read *Letters to Timothy* or *More to Timothy* will know of his pilgrimage. They will know how this Jew who struggled alone with the darkness at last came out to a firm faith in God.



is not easily fit into the categories of Judaism, and there are times when it bursts forth into a form of religion which is very near to Christianity. Yet he is not easily classified. He campaigned to help feed the people of Germany, and his equally vigorous campaign to get rid of prejudice and misrepresentation about the peoples of Germany came with a knock to those who had seen the Jewish people massacred in their midst. It was a constant wonder in the 1930's to the German people that Victor Gollancz, their great inter-war leader, was indeed a Jew. Since then he has battled for the Capital Punishment Bill, and on several important moral issues in this last generation he has been well to the front. He has constantly reminded more orthodox Christians of the implications of their faith.

In two recent books he has helped us to see what this means in terms of a spiritual pilgrimage. First *A Year of Grace*, an anthology which urged people to read straight through and not jump about from quotation to quotation. Now in what is in effect a second volume, *From Darkness to Light*, he makes the same request. It is not easy to do because both of the books are big books and they are both anthologies; the temptation is to turn the pages and pick out pieces here and there. In doing that they remind us of the riches of the nations. But to read through steadily is to watch a living faith. It is difficult to understand, particularly, I think, in the second volume. *A Year of Grace* stated the great moral issues. It showed the virtue of silence before adversity, it told of the grandeur of the human spirit in suffering, and it said much about the nature of man. In *From Darkness to Light*, however, is

the volume where we see the depths of experience to which Gollancz himself has stretched down. He begins in true darkness, with the nature of despair. There is, I think, nowhere in literature so full a collection of passages of despair. He touches the whole range of human emotions, and one cannot but feel that any writer who has collected this group of quotations together has himself felt the darkness. Indeed, the quotations which come from his own writing, about his own experience, confirm this. Yet gradually, light breaks; there is the discovery of pity, the discovery of love, the discovery of light in a dark world. These books have no dogmatic shape and they do not fit into anything that we might call a religious creed. It would be extremely difficult to read through the pages and compile a list of "I believe". The only clear statement that would come would be "I believe in the spirit of man". Now that is humanitarianism, or humanism, or something else that might be called by a name that indicates that it is less than the Christian faith; and yet as we read the passages we cannot make those judgments about the man who collected them. We know that his mind, his spirit and his relation with God, are indistinguishable from the finest in the Christian tradition. Yet he makes us feel uneasy. He moves about between Jewish and Christian as though there were no difference and there are times when we wonder if there is. He has compiled this anthology, which is really a confession of faith, around a series of experiences and he has tested religion not by a dogmatic statement; he has not even rejected dogma; he has tested it by sound experience of life.

So Victor Gollancz comes to

disturb the very roots from which our moral decisions come. Yet, good as this disturbance is, it does not carry with it the recommendation of the prophet's orthodoxy. He has stung us often into action and we were right to obey his call; but that does not commit us to his thinking. It is a dangerous heresy of modern thought that "what works is right". Science has carried the burden of too much truth in this way for several generations. Gollancz has found a philosophy to live by and from which his moral vigour appears to spring; but this is not so certain. It is more likely that it springs from his compassion. He has drawn upon the wisdom of the ages to build this philosophy; but one little quotation from A. N. Whitehead sums it up. "Religion is world loyalty." "World" is, of course, for Gollancz, the world of men. His own interpretation of this is, "One central value—or, to

put it in another way, the value that includes all other values—is respect for personality". There is so much that appeals there, that we forget how much he leaves out. Gollancz never gets beyond dealing with religion as an unnatural manifestation which can be developed out of man. His passion to hate the wrong and his conviction that what is right is unquestioned; but he has not measured the power of religion. A Christian will quarrel with any philosophy that can do no more with the Cross than describe it as supreme self-sacrifice. Gollancz's immature moral optimism is needed to arouse a sluggish Christian conscience. His theology will not do, and his understanding of the nature of man is not carried with it the recommendation of man as "desperately wicked". If it is right, the Christian teaching of the last centuries has been unduly worried about man and his nature.

E. H. ROBERTSON

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The address of The Christian Frontier Council is now  
59 Bryanston Street, London, W.1.

### *Frontier Luncheon*

At the Frontier Luncheon on Wednesday, 20th February, the Rev. Philip Lee-Woolf will speak on "Fundamentalism". Mr. Lee-Woolf is General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement, and has been especially concerned with relations between the S.C.M. and conservative evangelical groups. The chair will be taken by Mr. Edwin Barker, M.B.E., Assistant National Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., and the luncheon will take place at 12.45 p.m. at Student Movement House, 103 Gower Street, London, W.C.1.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*Mention in this list neither implies nor precludes subsequent notice.*

- Christian Essays in Psychiatry.* Ed. Philip Mairet. (S.C.M., 15s.)
- The Renewal of the Church.* W. A. Visser't Hooft. (S.C.M., 12s. 6d.)
- The Great Realities.* Samuel H. Miller. (Longmans, 10s. 6d.)
- From the Other Shore.* Alexander Herzen. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 15s.)
- The Strangeness of the Church.* Daniel Jenkins. (Gollancz, 12s. 6d.)
- Christ and Adam.* Karl Barth. (Scottish Journal of Theology, 6s.)
- The Background of Passion Music.* Basil Smallman. (S.C.M., 8s. 6d.)
- The Thesis ton Laikon entos ton Ekklesiastikon Organismou.* (Hieronymus Kotsonis, Athens.)
- Trying to Live.* (Harvill, 16s.)
- Home in the Mind.* G. L. Phillips. (Longmans, 5s. 6d.)
- His Name.* G. Appleton. (Edinburgh House Press and Macmillan, 9s. 6d.)
- Who is Jesus Christ?* S. Neill. (World Christian Books. Lutterworth Press, 2s. 6d.)
- The Church under the Cross.* J. B. Phillips. (C.M.S. Highway Press, 8s. 6d.)
- How Christian is Africa?* R. Oliver. (C.M.S. Highway Press, 1s. 6d.)
- The Twelve Together.* T. R. Morton. (Iona Community, 7s. 6d.)
- Christian Social Witness.* J. Clifford Gill. (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d.)
- Debt to Christ.* D. Webster. (C.M.S. Highway Press, 4s. 6d.)
- The Lee Abbey Story.* J. C. Winslow. (Lutterworth Press, 3s. 6d.)
- Christianity and Communication.* F. W. Dillistone. (Collins, 12s. 6d.)
- Strengthening the Spiritual Life.* N. F. S. Ferre. (Collins, 6s.)
- An Approach to Christian Education.* Edited R. E. Davies. (Epworth Press, 12s. 6d.)
- Christianity and Economic Problems.* D. L. Munby. (Macmillan, 25s.)

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- REV. THOMAS R. THRASHER.**—Rector of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Montgomery, Alabama.
- STEPHEN CARR.**—A C.M.S. Agricultural Missionary.
- DR. SYMANOWSKI.**—Director of the Gossner Mission at Mainz Kastel am Rhein, Germany.
- PHILIP MAIRET.**—Member of the Christian Frontier Council; formerly editor of *THE FRONTIER*.
- M. ALLCHIN.**—is a deacon on the staff of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington.
- OWIN ROBERTSON.**—Baptist Minister. Study Secretary of the United Bible Society.



# MOWBRAYS

## BOOKSHOPS

Any book reviewed or advertised in *Christian News - Letter* may be obtained from Mowbrays' bookshops by post. Although chiefly concerned with religious books, these bookshops are also well stocked with general literature and with selected children's books. Book Tokens are exchanged and sold.

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